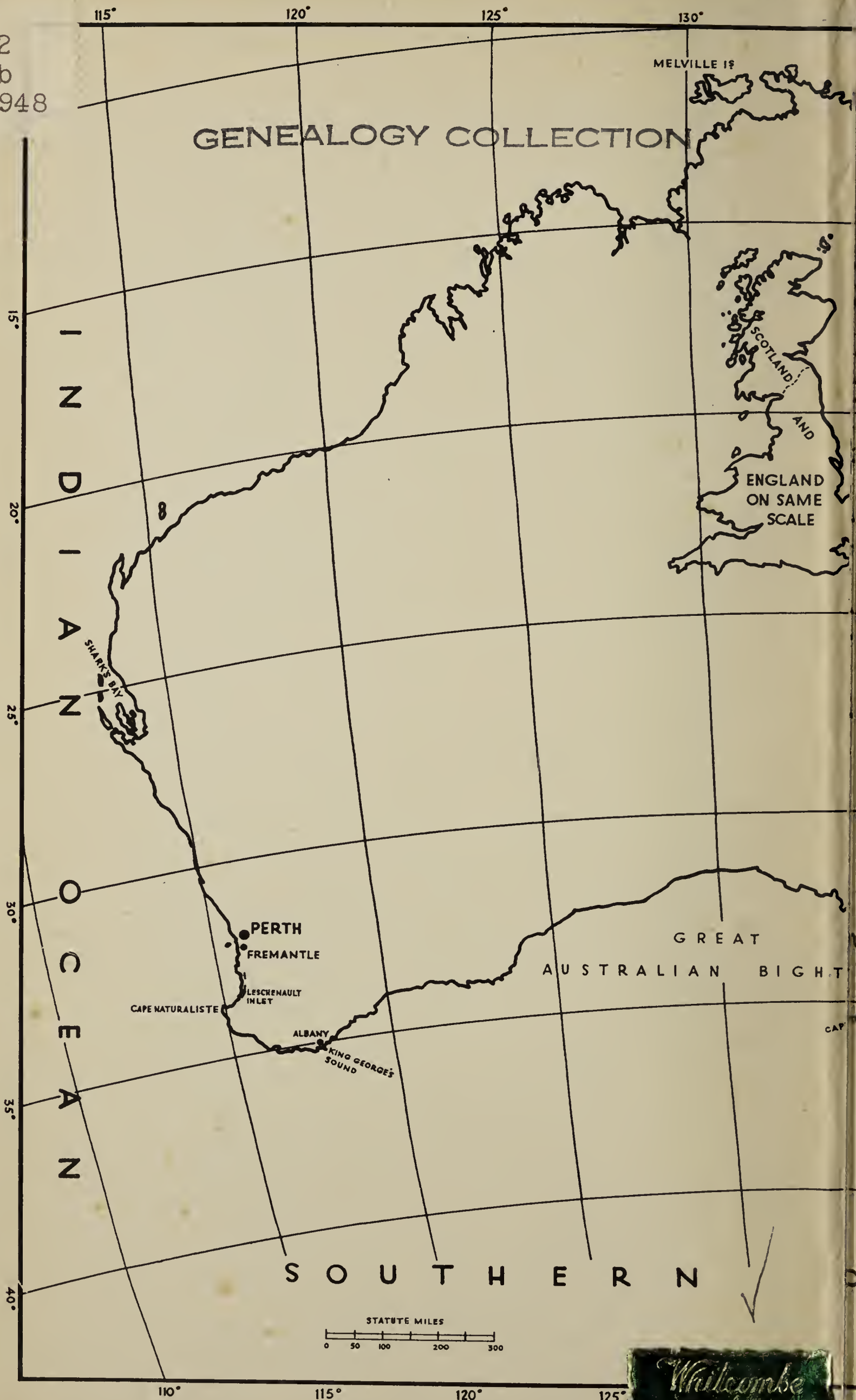


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THE HENTYS

By the same Author

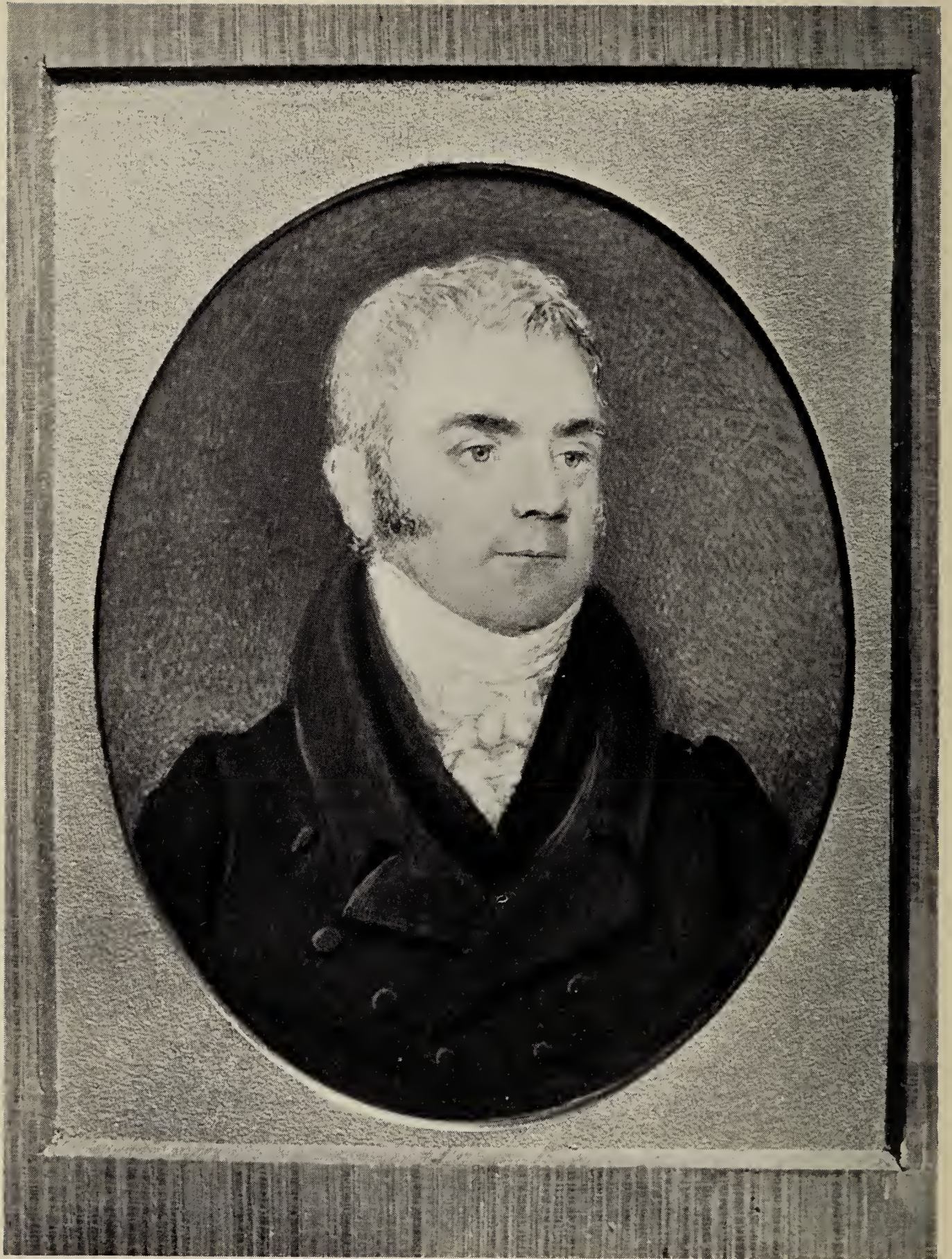
THE GOVERNOR'S LADY:
MRS. PHILIP GIDLEY KING

An Australian Historical Narrative



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THOMAS HENTY, 1823, AGED 48

Miniature by J. W. Rubidge

In the possession of Mrs. J. A. Henty-Wilson, Melbourne

THE HENTYS

AN AUSTRALIAN
COLONIAL TAPESTRY

Marnie Bassett

Geoffrey Cumberlege

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To
Ian, Jenny and Patrick
and
In Memory of Orme

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PREFACE

THIS is the true story of an English family whose migration to Australia began in the reign of George IV.

Even today, to migrate cannot be easy: in the eighteenth-thirties it was hard indeed. In leaving the Old Country for the colonies, would-be settlers of those days plunged into the almost unknown. But worse even than fear of the seas they had to cross—reasonable fear—and of what awaited them when they should land, was the knowledge that they could scarcely hope to see their homes, their parents, or their friends again. Such a break in continuity, for almost all of them a final severance from their past, was a shock to morale that only men and women of character could withstand. Not all our early migrants were built to withstand it. The years of 'free' emigration, as distinct from the convict era and before the discovery of gold, brought to Australia many of the lazy, the dishonest, the querulous, the merely incapable. But fortunately with these came others of a different sort—people, not great or prominent or widely cultured (though there were some of these), but with intelligence, probity, energy, and common sense. These men and women were of the type best fitted to overcome prejudice and nostalgia and adapt themselves to colonial life. Amongst such settlers must be counted the Hentys: their capital and their cattle and their sheep were indeed acceptable to a young country, but it was their character—the general decency of their outlook, combined with tenacity of purpose—that was their best contribution to the colony and their own most valuable asset as pioneers.

The Hentys' story is worth telling; and because, being pioneers in small communities, their lives were interwoven with the events of the day, in telling their story this book tells a part of Australia's too.

M. B.

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

1953



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Above all, I owe thanks to my husband for valuable criticism at each stage of the book's preparation, and for shared enjoyment of its theme.

ABBREVIATIONS

I. COLONIES AND SETTLEMENTS

K.G.S.	King George's Sound.
N.S.W.	New South Wales.
P.Ph.Dis.	Port Phillip District.
S.A.	South Australia.
V.D.L.	Van Diemen's Land.
W.A.	Western Australia.

2. NEWSPAPERS

<i>Corn. Chron.</i>	<i>Cornwall Chronicle.</i>
<i>Laun. Adv.</i>	<i>Launceston Advertiser.</i>
<i>Laun. Ex.</i>	<i>Launceston Examiner.</i>
<i>Perth Gaz.</i>	<i>Perth Gazette.</i>
<i>Port. Guard.</i>	<i>Portland Guardian.</i>
<i>Port. Merc.</i>	<i>Portland Mercury.</i>
<i>P. Ph. Gaz.</i>	<i>Port Phillip Gazette.</i>
<i>Syd. Gaz.</i>	<i>Sydney Gazette.</i>

3. OTHER SOURCES

<i>D.N.B.</i>	<i>Dictionary of National Biography.</i>
<i>I H.R.A.</i>	<i>Historical Records of Australia, Series I.</i>
<i>III H.R.A.</i>	<i>Historical Records of Australia, Series III.</i>
<i>Hobart Arch.</i>	State Library of Tasmania, Hobart, Archives Department.
<i>Melb. Arch.</i>	Public Library of Victoria, Archives Department.
<i>M.L.</i>	Mitchell Library.
<i>Sussex Arch.</i>	<i>Sussex Archaeological Collections.</i>
<i>W. A. Arch.</i>	Public Library of Western Australia, Perth, Archives Department.



Part I
ENGLISH BACKGROUND
1796–1828



I
FARMER'S FORTUNE

ONE Saturday in June 1829 the *Caroline*, a full-rigged ship of 340 tons, set sail from a Sussex port, bound confidently for the west coast of New Holland. Under private charter, she carried three of the seven sons of Thomas Henty of West Tarring, farmer and banker, on their way to the new settlement at Swan River with their labourers and servants, their stores and implements, their fruit-trees and their stock, there to make a new home where they planned to receive the rest of the Henty family in a year's time. Bales of hay and barrels of water encumbered her top-deck; on deck, too, were penned the poultry and rabbits; stabled on the main deck were pure-bred horses, prize cattle, and sheep—precious merinos recently shorn and rugged in flannel coats to protect them from the expected cold. The day was cloudy; the *Caroline* soon faded from view. Held in the memory of a small boy who saw her vanish off the English shore, she lived again sixty years later when, as an old man, he described that departure to a young Australian, great-grandson of Thomas Henty, Australian pioneer.¹

How was it that Henty, at fifty-four, had made up his mind to leave England and the life he knew? His reason was one that today moves many a man to migrate—the desire to give his family a better chance than a war-crippled England affords. It was a big decision; how big cannot be realized until we know something of the life that Thomas Henty had built up for himself

¹ The describer was William Evershed, of Worthing, and the listener his nephew, the late Arundel Henty Wilson of Melbourne, Australia.

and his children and that now, for their sake, he was to leave behind.

Henty was pure Sussex. As far back as the fourteenth century his forebears had lived at Antye Farm in the undulating woodland parish of Wivelsfield, 200 feet above the sea. The farm, Antye or Hantye, had given its owners their name, derived from the Anglo-Saxon *heanteage*—‘at the high enclosure’. On such gentle heights the downland farmers found loamy pockets for their crops, and for their sheep a carpet of sweet turf lying smooth over the chalky shoulders nearby. Marketing and marrying in the flourishing little agricultural towns in the valleys sloping to the sea, they seldom climbed the road that led northwards over the edge of the Weald into Surrey and on to London, forty miles away. Wivelsfield subsidy roll for 1327 contains the names of Johne and Roberto de Hentye; the poll tax of 1379 shows a Walter; a Thomas occurs in the roll of 1524.¹ Perhaps it was this Thomas, a subject of Henry VIII, who replaced an earlier dwelling with the two-story timbered Antye Farm still today snugly hidden up its winding lane.

Early in the eighteenth century the Hentys seem to have exchanged pasture for ploughland. Thomas’s grandparents are no longer to be found up on the Downs but on the rich hem of Sussex at the thriving port of Littlehampton, where ships built of Wealdon oak were busy with cargoes of timber, iron, and coal. Thomas’s father, William Henty, who married Jane Olliver of Kingston Farm,² was a man of substance who held the right of appointment to the fourteenth-century parish church of Littlehampton—a right that in those days could be bequeathed with a man’s other properties and which William did so bequeath to his sons Thomas and George when he died in 1796.³ In that year Thomas was twenty-one years old. He now bought a property in the parish of West Tarring not far

¹ Accounts of Wivelsfield and Antye Farm are given in *Sussex Arch.*, vol. xxxv, pp. 1 and 44–46; Mawer and Stanton, *Place Names of Sussex*, Part II, p. 305; *Counties*, vol. vii, pp. 117–24.

² In 1785 the parish of Kingston was sold as one farm by Sir John Shelley (father of the poet) to George and William Olliver; later Samuel Henty owned a part (*Horsfield*, vol. ii, p. 136). A Jane Olliver of an earlier generation married the Rev. James Penfold of Ferring, 9.8.1770 (Penfold’s *Sussex Pedigrees*, vol. ii, p. 294, MS., Public Library, Brighton).

³ Will of William Henty of the parish of Ferring, in the Chichester Consistory Court.

from his old home—281 acres of rich land with 3 acres of gardens and orchards and a roomy old house on it known as Church Farm. The price he paid was £12,800.¹

In moving from Littlehampton to Tarring, Henty was stepping into a quieter and lovelier world. Littlehampton was indeed old, as all Sussex ports are old; it had played its part in the many invasions of England—Roman, Saxon, Danish, Norman: and long before the Normans arrived a Saxon king had built a guardian keep, the nucleus of Arundel Castle, only a few miles up the river from the port. But now it was full of the bustle of modern ship-building and sea-trade and also was beginning to be a place of fashion. Because the Prince of Wales chose to live at Brighton, the towns and hamlets of the neighbouring coast had turned in the last few years into a series of sea-side resorts created by 'Fashion in support of Health and Pleasure'. If you were very festive and in want of bracing, you went to Brighton; if your tastes were quieter, physically and socially, you went to Littlehampton or to the once unknown fishing village of Worthing, both protected by the Downs from the north and east winds and where you could be near, but not too near, to the Pavilion and to its owner, the Prince. And if, like Charles Lamb, you were an individualist, you abhorred all watering-places whatever. As Lamb grumbled to a friend, 'We have been dull at Worthing one summer, duller at Brighton another, dullest at Eastbourne a third, and are at this moment doing dreary penance at—Hastings!'² It was to Worthing that the Court physicians sent the darling daughter of George III, the fragile Princess Amelia, in a vain attempt to strengthen her constitution; royalty was followed by increasing numbers of the well-to-do, strolling on its wide sands, bathing in the sea, and basking in the mildness of a climate that allowed figs and myrtles to grow as happily as in Italy.³

From Worthing it was possible to see, across wooded fields, the spire of Tarring's ancient church rising from a group of trees; close to the church and old village with its single straggling street were Thomas Henty's house and farm. The parish lay

¹ Title deeds of Tarring Farm House, in the care of Messrs. Charles, Malcolm, and Wilson, Solicitors, Worthing.

² *Essays of Elia: The Old Margate Hoy.*

³ *Sussex Arch.*, vol. xvi, p. 66.

beyond the fringe of fashion, steeped in antiquity. Terringue was named in Domesday by the survey officers sent by William the Conqueror 'all over England, into every shire, to list the lands and cattle and the inhabitants, free and bond'. The parish of Terringue belonged to Canterbury; those dwelling there were excused from serving on juries because of their suit and service to the archbishop during his visitations to the monastery at Terringue—and in Henty's day they were still so excused.¹ Thomas a'Beckett of Canterbury, it is said, brought from Normandy the fig-tree that was the parent of all the later fig orchards of the neighbourhood, planting it himself in the rectory garden where now the tree still lives and each year bears figs to the number of two. In the garden, too, is still the ancient square columbary—a rare shape—in long-past winters the source of clerical food.

Henty's property was known as Church Farm because it had for so long been part of the monastery's demesne. Thomas, being young and sociable and not in the least like Charles Lamb, no doubt liked the thought that the distractions of Brighton and Worthing lay not too far from his rural peace: enterprising and industrious, he probably enjoyed the prospect of fitting a modern well-ordered farm into the ancient framework of Tarring, and, domestic in his tastes, it was not long before he brought home a wife. Young Mrs. Henty was Frances Elizabeth Hopkins of Poling, near Arundel. In miniatures of Thomas and his wife painted when they had been married twenty-four years, his hair is grey but his thick eyebrows are still dark, his face alert and intelligent. Brown curls frame the oval of his wife's face within the soft ruffles of her muslin head-dress; her expression is direct and appealing and just a little sad: an unselfish face, without vanity.² His seems to show a pleased interest in a kindly world and holds not a hint that for most of those twenty-four years his country had been fighting for its very existence and that like the other landowners in England, large and small, he had been called on to provide most of the money needed for the struggle.

Thomas was twenty-four years of age and his wife twenty-

¹ *Sussex Arch.*, vol. xvi, p. 67.

² Painted by J. W. Rubidge (London), who exhibited three miniatures at the Royal Academy, 1823-4 (*Dictionary of Painters of Miniatures*).

three when they married in 1799.¹ James, the first of their eleven children, was born in 1800; only the last, a daughter who died in infancy, was born after the war years ended in 1815 with the battle of Waterloo. All but this infant and the youngest son were born at the farm and christened in the little parish church of St. Andrew's across the fields, thirteenth-century successor to the St. Andrew's mentioned in Domesday. Its sandstone font where they were baptized was of unknown antiquity. Five centuries had passed since the body of the church had been built in days when Magna Carta was still a new document. Two hundred years later the battlemented flint tower and shingled spire had been added before the battle of Bosworth Field. The bells that called Thomas Henty and his growing family to service on Sunday mornings had been recast in the days of Henry VIII and then, according to the churchwarden's accounts, hallowed at a cost of 18 shillings. In the east window a few fragments of stained glass had survived time—or perhaps Cromwell; last traces of coloured murals misted some of the stone columns; on the altar were the silver gifts of bygone eighteenth-century rectors, a paten, a chalice, and a flagon of Elizabethan design.²

The Henty children, like others, must often have gone unwillingly to the family pew; but much of the beauty of St. Andrew's and of its services must nevertheless have reached them through the haze of those half-dreaming reluctant hours, for the memory of their parish church, with the faith that it taught them, was carried to the other side of the world and remained as part of their lives to the end. Of the eleven children, all but two grew to maturity—surely in those times a tribute not only to the health but to the common sense of their parents.³ Indeed, common sense seems to have been one of the family

¹ Married by licence, Lyminster Parish Church, 2.12.1779 (parish records). Mrs. Henty's mother, Philadelphia Hopkins, *née* Penfold, was buried at Burpham, 9.8.23.

² *Sussex. Arch.*, vol. xvi, pp. 58–68.

³ Thomas's cousin Sam and his wife were not so fortunate: six tablets on the walls of Goring Church commemorate, mostly in rhymed lamentations, the deaths of four sons and two daughters who all died between the ages of fourteen and thirty-one, a fearful toll suggesting tuberculosis. Sam's house, Field Place, in the parish of Goring (now the Manor House Country Club, West Tarring), was rented and occupied by Thomas Henty for some years, his youngest son, Francis, being born there in Nov. 1815, and his second dying there of tuberculosis in 1819.

characteristics; kindness was another. Later on, letters between father and sons, and from their mother, show a good feeling that only a happy childhood can create.

Half a century before the Hentys settled at Tarring the fastidious young Horace Walpole had been outraged by the savagery of Sussex, its primitive inns, the lack of coaches, the wicked state of the roads: but by the time the Hentys took up house royal patronage had changed all that. The Duke of York's seat was at Oatlands and the Prince of Wales was spending more and more time in Brighton; important visitors needed better roads. But though the roads had more money spent on them, coach travel remained uncomfortable and even dangerous for many years. It seems unlikely that the Hentys often travelled the London road during the first years at the farm. With an energetic husband and numerous family, as mistress of a substantial house and its servants, Mrs. Henty must have had her hands full. Most of the ingredients for the generous meals of the period must have been grown at the farm itself or at one of those that Henty rented—the saddles of mutton, the Christmas goose, the vegetables; the apples and currants and plums for the pies, the corn for the home-baked bread. Little in Mrs. Henty's store-cupboard except tea, coffee, and sugar would have been brought from abroad; anything not available locally came from London in the great four-horse wagons that until the advent of Mr. McAdam carved the roads into ruts a foot or more deep. Shopping in the village was possible once a week at Tarring's Saturday market, granted its charter by Henry VI;¹ shops at Worthing were within easy walking distance and those at Brighton could be reached in an hour with a gig and a good pair of horses. London, several hours' journey away, perhaps provided materials for the better sorts of clothes—velvets for the spencers and pelisses, white or yellow India muslins for the revealing gowns of the classic period, sarsenets and kerseymeres for the wide-skirted all-concealing dresses of the later era.

The Hentys were married when the victory of the Nile had for the moment relieved England from the fear of invasion. Their first child, James, was a year old at the beginning of the false peace of 1801; he was still a baby of three when war broke

¹ *Horsfield*, vol. ii, p. 192.

out again. Long before that, everyone knew that the peace of Amiens was merely the truce that Napoleon needed to prepare for his attack on England, the country that must be subdued before he could dominate Europe. Everyone, not merely the King and his admirals and generals, knew of the feverish building of invasion vessels in every cranny of the French coast, and everyone knew also that, when the attack on London came, it would not be up the Thames but would fall on the southern counties and in particular on those sloping Sussex beaches so perfectly designed for the landing of large numbers of men. Napoleon's coming and England's measures to meet him must have been discussed with anxiety from hour to hour at the farm, in the cottages of Tarring, and in every Sussex home.

In the mellow summer and autumn of 1803 the English public was aroused by speech and pamphlet and savage caricature and it was then that Napoleon became for the ordinary English man, woman, and child the Ogre, the Devil Incarnate, the Arch Fiend. A foggy night, and he might elude our watching ships; from his landing-barges men and guns and horses would pour across the flats of Sussex and massacre would follow. These were the images that got between men and their sleep in those days of waiting: they realized that, if enemy troops did land, the defence of homes and families depended on themselves.

Thomas Henty must have shared this view. By now he had two small sons and in the middle of this alarming summer a third was born. There was the problem of evacuating them and their mother and the womenfolk of the household if the enemy came; he also had to plan for the miserable act of destroying his acres and his animals in accordance with the official policy that, in the event of a landing, the country was to be laid waste before its owners left it and retired inland. This system of driving the country, as it was called, was opposed by the famous Colonel John Moore, writing to his chief from his post on the cliffs of Kent.¹ Moore held that England was too well stocked for thorough destruction in the short time that would be available after the enemy landed; he urged that, instead of the system of drive and retreat, which he said would lead to confusion and despondency, the system should be 'to head and oppose'. Horses and wagons alone, he said, should be removed, and

¹ *Diary of Sir John Moore*, Major-Gen. Sir J. F. Maurice, pp. 73, 74.

in the coast countries every man capable of bearing arms must be enrolled. . . . Most men, I take for granted, can fire and load a musket. . . . No foot of ground should be conceded that is not marked with the blood of the enemy

—words that could have been the inspiration of Churchill's 'we shall fight on the beaches . . . we shall fight in the fields and in the streets . . . we shall never surrender.' Thanks to Moore the proposal to drive the country was given up; but, as nobody thought to tell this to the farmers, what was expected of them they did not know. But they were quite clear as to their duty and their own wishes in the matter of defence: on the passing of the Volunteer Act men flocked to join and to put on once more the red coats made for the earlier days of the French wars. Thomas Henty joined the Yeomanry Cavalry and like everyone else he had to fit drills into his daily round.¹ Bugle-calls and shouted commands were heard in the green fields—those 'not-yet-insulted fields' written of by the Poet Laureate, Mr. Pye—that had so far 'defied The whelming deluge of Invasion's tide'.² Camps appeared, armed towers were built every quarter of a mile along the Sussex and Kentish coasts; fire beacons of furze and cord-wood, with their barrels of tar, stood ready to signal to inland counties the approach of the French. On Wednesday, the 19th October 1803, a national day of prayer and fasting was held. We may picture Thomas, scarlet-coated, marching the men of the village into the parish church. Kneeling with his company, his thoughts must have been with his young wife visible in her pew and sharing his unspoken prayer that England and their family life might yet be saved from the invader.

England was saved, and by her Navy. Napoleon's fleet was

¹ 'The Volunteers' leaders, said Moore, 'will of course be the neighboring gentlemen and better sort of farmers. . .'. Henty was gazetted a lieutenant in the Yeomanry and Volunteer Corps of Sussex on 17 Nov. 1803 (*Sussex and Weekly Advertiser*, 28.11.03), and promoted to captaincy of a company 29.11.04. His commission, adjuring him to 'take the said Company into Your Care and Charge, and duly to exercise as well the Officers as Soldiers thereof in Arms', was signed by Charles, Duke of Richmond, His Majesty's Lieutenant for the County of Sussex. The document bears a marginal note in Thomas Henty's graceful eighteenth-century script that 'This was the Duke who died of Hydrophobia in Canada'.

² Henry James Pye, Laureate, 1790–1813. The verses were composed for reading at a review of Berkshire Volunteers to be held by the King (Broadley and Wheeler, *Napoleon and the Invasion of England*).

immobilized in port: as an English admiral remarked, 'I do not say the French will not come; I only say they will not come by water'. A few uneasy years were still to pass before it became quite certain that Napoleon had to agree with the admiral, years during which there continued to be duties and alarms for the volunteers and England learned to love Nelson as deeply as she detested Napoleon. The *Victory* was refitting at Portsmouth when a final invasion rumour brought the volunteers out for the last time. When Nelson took *Victory* once more to sea she was on her way to intercept the combined French and Spanish fleets; when she returned Trafalgar had been fought and won. But Nelson, the beloved admiral, was dead. Laurel-decorated coaches sped over England shouting both the triumph and the tragedy. The people could not know that they need never fear invasion by Napoleon again; what they did know was that the loss of Nelson was beyond measure, and the whole nation mourned.

After Trafalgar the Hentys had a small and curiously appropriate link with Nelson. This is the story: a certain frigate captain, Griffiths, fell in with the *Victory*, carrying Nelson's body to England and travelling in company with another ship of the line. Griffiths visited this ship, whose captain gave him a sheep from his stores. Griffiths then went on board *Victory*; 'Well, Griffiths,' said Captain Hardy, 'how are you off for livestock?' Captain Griffiths was in difficulties for fresh meat, and said so, and Hardy at once presented him with a sheep from the late admiral's private store. The first sheep was killed at once and eaten by the frigate's crew; it was then the turn of the sheep that had belonged to Nelson. Captain Griffiths, pacing his quarter-deck, observed the ship's butcher loitering about as if wishing to speak to him but afraid to do so. 'Well, my man,' said the captain, 'what do you want?' The man replied, 'We hope, Sir, you will not kill Lord Nelson.' 'What do you mean?' said the captain, 'Lord Nelson is dead already.' 'Why,' said the embarrassed butcher, 'we hope you will not kill Lord Nelson's sheep, which we call Lord Nelson.' 'Why,' said Griffiths, 'what shall I do for fresh meat, as the other sheep is all eaten?' 'Well, Sir,' the man persisted, 'the crew will be much obliged if you do not kill the sheep.' 'Well then,' said the captain, 'I will not have it killed.' The man turned at once and ran below to tell

the crew and immediately a great cheer sounded from the hatchways. The sheep became the crew's pet. When the frigate anchored off Portsmouth, Captain Griffiths

wrote to Mr. Henty of Tarring, near Worthing, to offer him the sheep, with the proviso that he should preserve it alive. The loyal Mr. Henty sent a cart to fetch it from Portsmouth, and a crowd assembled to see the sheep land. The sheep lived for sixteen years upon Mr. Henty's farm, and the visitors of Worthing used to go to see the animal that once belonged to the immortal and illustrious Nelson.¹

The Hentys' daughter, Jane, was born not long before Trafalgar; little Henry, the infant born at the height of the invasion alarms, died at fourteen months; before 1815, the year of Waterloo, six more sons were born—Charles, William, Edward, Stephen George, John, and Francis; a second daughter, born in 1817, lived only a few months. At this time, Thomas and his family, too numerous for the smaller Church Farm, lived in his late cousin's house, Field Place, in the parish of Goring and just across the fields. Up to this time Henty was a prosperous man, but he must have found it something of a task to bring up such a family during the war and post-war years, when rural taxes were growing and rural incomes were shrinking and the world was changing fast. The Hentys were not of that class that by hereditary habit went to one of the great public schools; they belonged to the middle gentry that were tutored in some rectory or served by one of the grammar schools. William, we know, was at school at Horsham and later at Wandsworth, and an address written in a childish hand on the fly-leaf of an old school primer on *The Use of the Globes* shows that Master Francis Henty was being coached at Ewell Rectory at the age of twelve.² The Henty boys made a name for themselves as village cricketers and may have had their earliest lessons in the village school, held then, and still, in the old Manor House of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Jane probably had a governess—one of those young or not-so-young ladies,

¹ The anecdote was related by the frigate's captain when he was Rear-Admiral John Anselm Griffiths, in a letter published in *The Times*, 11.12.1849.

² At Ewell, a little north of Epsom on the London-Worthing coach road, there was both a vicar (the Rev. James Maggs from 1803-24) and a lay-rector, one of the Glyn family, whose house is still known as The Rectory (information from the Rev. V. P. Davis, Vicar of Ewell, 1947).

always 'of good connections', who advertized in *The Times* that they were prepared to teach an impressive number of subjects without the aid of masters, their object being 'not so much emolument as the securing a situation of respectability and comfort'. When Jane needed the elegant accomplishments usual to a young lady of sixteen, she may have been sent to Brighton as a parlour-boarder in a finishing school, such as the Misses Wynne's Paragon House.¹ For the boys as they grew up there was riding and shooting and sailing, while cricket was to these Sussex lads a part of their lives. Did Jane go riding, too, or was she kept at home to learn to bake and preserve and sew a fine seam? Was she the spoilt only daughter or her eight brothers' slave? At such things concerning Jane, we can only guess.

Of the eight sons, four were at first to continue in the yeoman tradition as sheep farmers, one joined the Navy, one turned to law, and two became business men. Henty himself was not simply a farmer but a business man as well. In 1805—Trafalgar's year—together with three friends he founded one of those provincial family banks that Trevelyan says were valuable in financing both the industrial and the agricultural revolutions, helping money to flow from agriculture to industry and from factory back to field.² The other partners were an Olliver, from his mother's family, a Hopkins, presumably from his wife's, and a neighbouring land owner, Thomas's senior officer in the Yeomanry, Colonel William Margesson. The bank was at Worthing, with branches at Arundel, Steyning, and Horsham, and later on was to provide a training for the business men of the family, the eldest and third sons, James and Charles.

¹ *The Times* advertisement, Saturday, 29.6.16.

² Trevelyan, *English Social History*, p. 394.

A FARMER'S SON AND THE BATTLE OF ALGIERS

IN the summer of 1816, a bad year for farmers, Henty's second son, Thomas, joined the Navy. The long French wars were over, but Tom did not join up to be a peace-time sailor—not he: at fourteen he volunteered to take part in Admiral Lord Exmouth's second expedition against the Barbary pirates. Tom, it is safe to say, knew nothing of Algiers and the complexities of English relationships with the North African States then grouped under the name of Barbary and ruled from the Ottoman Porte; nothing of the fact that, in the Mediterranean, English seamen (including English pirates) had depended on Mohammedan Barbary for water and provisions ever since the Reformation had deprived them of Christian help from Catholic France, Italy, and Spain; nothing of why England had a consul in Algiers, or of the long story of treaties and disputes, of insults swallowed and gifts proffered and accepted throughout the seventeenth century; nothing of the even greater need for Barbarian help during the eighteenth century, when Gibraltar had to be provisioned, and when of late years in the Napoleonic Wars great fleets in the Mediterranean had to be fed. Peace had made England independent of the Barbary States at last. It was now possible to tell their rulers that the European seamen they had long held captive and enslaved must be set free. The task of carrying the message had been entrusted to Lord Exmouth, Admiral of the Red. By negotiation and payment of ransoms, backed by a show of force, he had secured the release of a number of Christian slaves held by the rulers of Tunis and Tripoli and, he hoped, 'finally smoked the horrors of Christian slavery . . . we have released 2500 poor Creatures and left the dungeons empty—I hope for ever'.¹ He had, in fact, gone further than his instructions and induced the Beys of Tunis and Tripoli not only to release their

¹ C. Northcote Parkinson's *Edward Pellew, Viscount Exmouth* (1934), p. 430; Parkinson is the main authority for this chapter.

prisoners but to promise that the practice of slavery would cease. At Algiers, however, things had not gone so well. In the name of Europe he had warned its ruler, Omar, that unless he ceased to harry shipping and to enslave the captured seamen, Algiers would have to meet the world at arms. Omar, an intelligent Greek, saw the point: the admiral, jubilant, signalled 'all settled' to a restive and disappointed Fleet. But by the next morning Omar had changed his mind; he now asked for six months to get the authority of the Porte. Both men lost their tempers; Exmouth returned to the sea-front through an angry mob and decks were cleared for action, while Omar sent messages to his provincial governors announcing war. War, however, had not yet come. Exmouth felt that he had exceeded his instructions; contrary winds, a dangerous lee shore, and the town's considerable fortifications, made his chances of successful action small. Overnight, Omar's anger, also, cooled: he attempted reconciliation with the gift of an ostrich and a horse. Matters were left up in the air and the English squadron sailed for home.

In England, and abroad, the expedition was regarded as a failure; Exmouth, it was thought, had done not too much but too little. Almost at once, news came that at Bona, on the Algerian coast, some two hundred coral fishermen from Corsica, Sardinia, and Sicily, working under licence to the English Consul at Algiers, while on their way to celebrate mass ashore, had been murdered by Omar's Turkish troops. Exmouth, sharing the public horror, offered to go back, and this time there was to be no velvet glove.

Was it the hope of taking part in this Algerian adventure that decided Tom Henty to make the Navy his career? For the 'secret' destination of the Fleet, then being hastily assembled, was widely known almost at once. Officers clamoured to be accepted for what seemed likely to be the last chance of active service. Exmouth, knowing the inevitable violence of the battle to come, refused to take his own relatives and friends and staffed the flagship, *Queen Charlotte*, almost wholly with strangers. In one or two cases, it is said, he gave in to importunate fathers and took their sons, to oblige. Captain William Paterson, of *Minden*, did the same; for on board *Minden*, one of the three big ships of the squadron, young Tom Henty was eventually accepted as

a Volunteer, 1st Class. Captains could still at that time take on board a number of boys of their own choice without any preliminary training and many who were to become distinguished officers entered the Navy in this way before it was obligatory to have schooling ashore first.¹ Mr. Henty had evidently enough interest with Captain Paterson to persuade him that his Tom was a likely lad.

While requests to join Exmouth poured in from officers, it was far otherwise with the lower decks. Unstirred by appeals from the admiral himself, seamen entitled to discharge refused to sign on again unless they had already spent all their pay: they had had enough. At last the ships were filled, but only with those who, being penniless or recently signed on for service, could not help themselves, and with such additional recruits as were combed from the taverns of the south coast towns.

When Tom became a sailor his sister Jane was only eleven. She had not yet acquired the beautifully bound album that a few years later she and her brothers and friends were to adorn with elegant little drawings and with verses, sentimental, teasing, or morbid with tears, forget-me-nots, and partings-never-to-meet-again; verses whose words today, as the yellowing pages are turned, seem to falter wistfully into the air like the notes of a musical box. When Tom left home, in blue jacket, long white kerseymere trousers, and peaked cap, somebody wrote certain *Lines to Thomas Henty about to embark as a Midshipman in the Minden 74 on his departure with Lord Exmouth on the Expedition against Algiers, August, 1816*. The verses, treasured by his family, were afterwards copied into her album by Jane:

Go, gallant Youth, go with the World's applause
And reap true glory in a Christian cause;
Go share new honours with thy brave Compeers
And hurl the British thunder on Algiers.

When Europe scarce has breathed from all her throes
Or known the sweets Tranquillity bestows,
When scarce illustrious Wellington has hurl'd
From his proud height the *Despot* of the world.

Say—shall those Afric pirates of the main
Disturb fair Peace and break her golden reign?

¹ Michael Lewis, *England's Sea Officers*, pp. 96–99.

Shall England's pennant, streaming in the air,
Crouch at the presence of a base Corsair?

The shade of Nelson rises from the grave
To vindicate the rights he died to save.
Go thou brave souls, on Providence rely,
And guard your Nelson's dying legacy.

And tho' awhile the British Lion sleep,
Go tell those worthless monsters of the deep
That, roused to vengeance by insulting foes,
He wakes more dreadful from a short repose.

Nowadays, verses written to our sons who go to war are in less grandiloquent vein; but it is only the formula that is different—the feeling behind is the same. We know what Thomas Henty and his wife suffered in saying goodbye to the boy who was still only a child. Maybe the adventure was in part a crusade; certainly they were proud of him; but even if he survived the coming battle he would not return to England with the Fleet, for *Minden* was to go on to the East India Station and Tom was to go too.

The Fleet sailed from Plymouth just a month after England heard the news of the Bona massacre and arrived at Gibraltar in five weeks. *Minden* had been sent ahead to Gibraltar to make final arrangements for the attack and Tom joined her there two days after the Fleet dropped anchor. *Minden's* muster-table shows that Thos. Henty, aged fourteen, was not a 'prest' man but a Volunteer, 1st Class; that he had been paid a bounty of £1. 7s. 8d.; advanced two months' pay—£4. 18s.; charged £1. 11s. 11d. for slops to save his nice little suit, and 3s. 2d. for tobacco.¹ Three days later he was on his way from Gibraltar to meet the pirates face to face.

The victory of Algiers ranks high in naval history for brilliance of planning and execution, while for courage and endurance it is said to have been far above even the other famous battles of the period. So much for the quality of tavern-scrapings when well-led and when inspired, as these men undoubtedly were, by the feeling that they were there to rescue white brothers from pirates, inhuman and dark of skin. The battle was fought right under the ramparts, so close to the fortifications that the English

¹ Admiralty 37/5672 P.R.O., *Muster Table H.M.S. Minden*, 1816–17–18.

sailors, waiting in silence for the first enemy shot, could clearly see the eyes in the dark faces watching them from the mole. Then broke out the gun-fire that was to thunder for hours; black smoke choked the air, shrouding every ship from the others and filling them 'tween decks with an impenetrable pall. But Exmouth's plans, known in detail to each officer, were carried out in the smother as closely as possible and the enemy was beaten as our powder ran out. The English casualties were enormous; *Minden* had her share,¹ but Tom Henty came safe through. Exmouth had astonished his young Levantine interpreter by changing at the approach of battle from a mild-mannered somewhat portly elderly gentleman into one 'all-fightful as a fierce lion which had been chained in its cage and was set at liberty', and he ended the action with his coat-tails cut to ribbons and his face bleeding from a slight wound.² Next day he wrote to the Admiralty that

in all the vicissitudes of a long life of public service, no circumstance has ever produced on my mind such impressions of gratitude and joy as the event of yesterday. To have been one of the humble instruments, in the hands of Divine Providence, for bringing to reason and destroying forever the insufferable and horrid system of Christian slavery can never cease to be a source of delight and heartfelt comfort to every individual happy enough to be employed in it. . . . A thousand slaves are now cheering on the mole.³

Tom, also, lost no time in writing home. Only a fragment of his letter survives, copied by Jane into her album. Exulting, he wrote that

The action lasted nine hours and forty eight minutes, the shot whistling about us in all directions. We were the last to haul off but when a sailor called 'Magazine empty' we thought it time to haul off too and are going to Gibraltar to repair.

Not, it is hoped, before Tom had a sight of those rescued and cheering slaves. Boats were sent to the mole to embark them in transports for return to their native countries. Into the boats they tumbled, shouting joyous thanks to the King of England

¹ *Naval Chronicle*, vol. xxxvi, p. 257.

² Salamé, *Narrative of the Expedition to Algiers* (1819), p. 36.

³ *Naval Chronicle*, vol. xxxvi, p. 254. A *London Gazette Extraordinary*, issued 15 Sept., quoted this from the dispatch brought the previous night by Captain James Brisbane of the flagship *Queen Charlotte*, dated 28 Aug.



I. MRS. THOMAS HENTY, 1823, AGED 47

Miniature by J. W. Rubidge

In the possession of Mrs. J. A. Henty-Wilson, Melbourne



S. View of the Residence of M^r Henry Tarring.

By permission of the Worthing Public Library Committee

2. CHURCH FARM, WEST TARRING

Aquatint by James Rouse, 1822



3. WORTHING FROM THE BEACH

Drawn and engraved by R. Havell, 1824

and the English admiral who had delivered them from hell. One of the rescued men, formerly a servant of the Comte d'Artois, had been captive so long that he had not heard of the French Revolution and the guillotining of his master's brother, the French King. Another, who had been in jail for twenty-six years, was originally a resident of Brighton; later he was to find that some fields that he owned had been sold long since and were now built upon by substantial houses and the Pavilion of the Prince of Wales.¹

Algiers was very soon refortified; the 'horrid system of Christian slavery' was exchanged for the horrid custom of killing prisoners instead. Only a year after the battle of Algiers, a corsair had the hardihood to appear in the English Channel and to take a Hamburg ship within sight of the white cliffs. Scoldings from England, rebukes from Europe, availed nothing: piracy persisted until 1830 when Algiers was conquered and annexed by France.²

After the battle of 1816, *Minden*, as Tom had written, went to Gibraltar and thence to her post as flagship of the East India Station, as originally planned. But Tom's service in her was to last only a few months; in his short time in the Navy he suffered worse than wounds: he developed tuberculosis of the lungs. There was to be no more adventuring. From Trincomalee he was invalided to England, lingered a few months more and then, in his eighteenth year, he died at his own home.

When many years afterwards Tom's parents tore up their roots and transplanted themselves to the other end of the world, it must have been a special grief to part from everything associated with young Tom. In their new home, of all their big family, only he was missing. After some time they seem to have felt the need to link themselves to him anew. Accordingly, they had a tablet made and put on the wall of their old church at Tarring, where it looks down today from above the vestry door, recording the affection for his memory felt by his parents 'now living in a distant land'.

¹ Gossip from the *Naval Chronicle*, vols. xxxvi and xxxvii.

² *Parkinson*, op. cit., p. 468.

SPANISH MERINOS

BY the end of the eighteenth century, when Henty bought his property at Tarring, farming was not only a respected calling but a fashionable one and the farmer was accepted as an important man. Henty, citizen soldier and banker though he might be, was first and foremost a farmer, playing his modest part in the agricultural revolution. Inspired by the writings of the agricultural reformer, Arthur Young, and warmly encouraged by the Farmer King, the great land-owners such as the Duke of Bedford, Coke of Norfolk, Lord Sheffield, and the Earl of Egremont from Henty's own Sussex, devoted their wealth and their energies to the improvement of soil, crop, and stock. Substantial farmers such as Henty, with his near 300 acres and rented lands besides, joined zealously in the campaign to use every square yard of good earth, first to help England to prosperity and later to save her life. Farmers' discussion clubs were formed, ploughing matches held, and once a year agriculturalists from all over England gathered at the Duke of Bedford's Woburn Abbey or at Coke's Holkham to view and judge the results of modern farming methods. At Woburn a large company of enthusiasts assembled on five consecutive days at the duke's farms, where prizes were distributed for the best cattle and sheep and the most skilful ploughing. The company watched shearing, attended wool sales where the duke acted as auctioneer, and inspected improved implements of husbandry. Breakfast and dinner were provided for everyone in the old hall of the abbey, and in this way, says the *Morning Chronicle*, the duke entertained 'near two hundred noblemen, gentlemen and yeomen'. The guests were divided between three tables according to their rank, the tables being arranged to converge at one central point so that the duke was able to preside equally over them all. The conversation, it is reported, was entirely agricultural. The *Chronicle* considered that

Hospitality could not be more nobly or usefully exercised than on this occasion, by the Duke of Bedford, from whose magnificent

mansion and highly cultivated farms, everyone went away greatly pleased and instructed, and diffused the information they had acquired and the zeal they had imbibed, over various parts of the country.¹

Henty, being an enterprising farmer and, as he himself said, an excessively curious one, may well have been among the yeomen guests at the Woburn sheep-shearings; but if not he probably heard all about them from Lord Egremont, whom he knew and whose estates at Petworth, up on the Downs, were a model to the county. George Wyndham O'Brien, Earl of Egremont, who was not only a first-class farmer but also a successful breeder of horses and winner of the Derby and the Oaks—each five times²—was even more famous for his love of art and his friendly hospitality to many English artists. J. W. Turner was at Petworth a great deal and has left innumerable water-colours of its interior and of the park. Two of his best-known pictures were painted in a room set aside by Egremont as Turner's private studio, a room shut against even Egremont himself unless he used a peculiar warning knock. Egremont, the generous, easy-going lover of art, horses, and his fellow man, 'the perfect pattern of an English country gentleman', is acclaimed thus by an anonymous contemporary:

Heedless of pomp, to art and science dear,
 Lord of the soil, see Egremont appear.
 Firm in attachment to his native land,
 No foreign feeling guides his fostering hand;
 In judgment sound, in contemplation calm,
 To gifted Britain still he gives the palm;
 To pining genius still he points the way,
 And merit ushers to the blaze of day.
 While all around in every deed we see
 The sterling stamp of true nobility.³

Henty bought horses from the famous Egremont stud and became something of a horse-breeder himself, but of all his farming occupations the one that interested him most was the breeding of sheep; and the sheep to which he devoted years of care and skill was the merino. Most Englishmen of Henty's day

¹ *Bischoff*, vol. i, pp. 265-7.

² *Horse Racing, Its History and Early Records*, p. 181.

³ *Horsfield*, p. 179.

thought of sheep as, first, mutton and only second as providers of wool. Long wool, essential for worsted, was, of course, as English as roast mutton; but fine wool, imported from Spain at great cost, could not, it was thought, from the nature of things, be grown outside Spain. English wool manufacturers believed this as profoundly as anyone else; but a few people, more willing to experiment, believed that it would be possible to acclimatize the merino—that thin unhandsome creature known to thrive on exercise and poor pasture—if it could be got. How to get the merinos out of Spain was the difficulty. Under the penal laws of that country it had for long been a capital offence to export even a single sheep, so greatly was Spain dependent on its wool trade. Despite this, in the last hundred years there had been a leakage of merinos into other European countries, notably Saxony and France. The King of Spain, whose head, despite the law, was apparently easy because it wore a crown, had given his cousin, the Elector of Saxony, 300 sheep from the royal flock to help restore the impoverished country after the Seven Years War. Every Sunday, by command of the Elector, church congregations of Saxony were instructed from the pulpit in the best method of looking after sheep and treating their wool. Twenty-five years later, as a result, a quarter of the sheep of Saxony were pure merinos.¹

England had not been so fortunate. While the merino flocks of Saxony and Austro-Hungary and the Rambouillets of France were building prosperity for their countries, England continued every year to pay Spain for as much as six million pounds of wool. The first person to take steps to change this was George III, not, like the Elector, by receiving a gift from a royal cousin but by conspiring successfully to defeat the Spanish law.²

One morning in 1788, after riding from the Queen's House to Kew, the King was walking in Richmond Gardens attended by only one equerry, Robert Fulke Greville, the charming 'Colonel Wellbred' of Fanny Burney's *Diary*. King and equerry

¹ *Bischoff*, p. 246; *Philosophical Magazine*, 1st series, vol. xvii, pp. 350-5, author not stated but undoubtedly Sir Joseph Banks.

² Books about the history of the wool industry contain a number of variations of the story of the source of George III's merino flocks, none of them completely accurate and none referring to the only authentic account—that in the *Diaries of Robert Fulke Greville*, ed. by F. McNo Bladon, vol. i, pp. 71-73, from MS. in the Windsor Archives.

paused to contemplate His Majesty's flock of Wiltshire sheep feeding in the park. Watching them, Greville recalled sheep that he had seen on a visit to Saxony; he recounted to the deeply interested King the details of a flock of Spanish sheep that had 'prospered successfully and had extended great improvements to the flocks of that Country'. All this was news to the King. Greville has described that conversation's momentous results:

Struck with the Account, and having paused upon it a little in fixed consideration, His Majesty asked me if some Spanish sheep might not be procured and brought to this country.

Greville replied that they might, but he could not at once think how; he did know, however, that the success of any plan would depend upon its secrecy. The King told Greville to give the matter thought and to report the result next time that they rode together. A few days later, with no ears but their horses' cocked for the conversation, the King asked Greville what progress he had made. Greville replied that he had seen Sir Joseph Banks, doyen of all scientific undertakings, and had told him in confidence of the King's desire. Banks had responded with an instant offer of his humble services and was at H.M.'s command. 'Sir Joseph Banks is just the man!' exclaimed the King. And so he was: with agents in every country whose business it was to ship to England all sorts of rare plants and specimens for Banks's own collection and for the Royal Gardens at Kew, he was the obvious 'Instrument for the Patriotic Plan'. Banks was given an audience with the King, and Greville says that 'The speculation was instantly and carefully begun. Everything met with that success which judicious arrangements from the first so well encouraged'—but he does not divulge what those judicious arrangements were. Brief references in the Windsor Archives show that towards the end of 1789 some sheep were shipped from the old Basque port of Bilbao and were followed by more sent from Lisbon, and that not only was Sir Joseph concerned in the plot, but also Mr. Under-Secretary Nepean and Lord Auckland, lately His Majesty's Ambassador Extraordinary at Madrid.¹ Two of these men, Nepean and Banks, were closely associated in different ways with the early

¹ Banks to the King, 25.11.1789 (Royal Archives, Windsor, *Geo. Papers*, No. 6637).

history of Australia; Banks had been regarded as the authority on that country ever since he had landed on its coast from Cook's ship, *Endeavour*, nearly twenty years before, while Mr. Nepean was at the present moment a good deal engaged with public matters concerning the dispatch of the First Fleet to Botany Bay with a thousand convicts to form Australia's first white settlement: little did these men dream that in forwarding the King's secret business they were taking the first steps in founding Australia's greatest industry. And in that founding Thomas Henty's Tarring flocks were to play a part.

The sheep, arriving by twos and threes, were sent to Richmond and Kew; inevitably, the secret of the King's merinos began to leak out. Their numbers were increased by a gift of thirty of the finest Negretti breed from the flock of the Marchioness del Campo, wife of the Spanish Ambassador to the Court of St. James. At least, says Greville, they were thought to be a gift until some time afterwards an inquiry from Spain to know how the flock fared was

accompanied with this hint, that if His Majesty should enquire what would be an acceptable return, that a set of horses would be very gratifying. A hint so plain could not be so well over-looked, therefore a set of horses were selected from His Majesty's stables and sent.

Augmented by a large flock, a genuine present from the Spanish Government to the King, there were soon enough rams for distribution to breeders in different parts of England, first as royal gifts and then by means of the annual auction sales to which the King was persuaded to give his consent. Naturally, these sales roused a great deal of interest among sheep men: at Woburn, long wool auctioned by His Grace the Duke of Bedford had brought 1 shilling a pound, whereas wool from the King's Spanish flock auctioned by Sir Joseph Banks had brought 5 shillings, almost as much as the price of the best imported Spanish wool. One of the keenest bidders at the 1804 sale of the King's merinos was a certain Captain John Macarthur from New South Wales, then in England in consequence of an 'untoward misunderstanding' between the governor of that colony and himself.¹ Much of Macarthur's English visit had

¹ John Macarthur (1767-1834), founder of the Australian wool industry and a leading figure in the early history of New South Wales. Arriving in the colony in 1790 as lieutenant in the New South Wales Corps, he successfully carried on farm-

been spent in rousing the interest of officials and manufacturers in his efforts to grow fine wool in New South Wales for export to England. He was soon to return to Sydney and intended to take with him some of the King's pure merino stock. As was reported,

Notwithstanding the heavy and almost incessant rain, nearly fifty gentlemen and breeders of sheep assembled soon after eleven o'clock, at the pens of the sheep intended for sale, and minutely examined them. Sir Joseph Banks, who had but just got abroad from a severe fit of the gout, ventured out, and stayed in the field the whole time. Lot 1 was a ram, labouring under a temporary privation of sight, which Sir Joseph Banks and Richard Stamford, the King's Shepherd, stated to be not very uncommon with these sheep at this season of the year, but from which there was no doubt he will perfectly recover. The weight of his fleece was stated to be at the last shearing 3 lbs 4 ozs; he was knocked down to Captain Macarthur at £16. 5s., after Sir Joseph Banks had apprised him that an old act of Parliament stood in the way of exporting sheep from this country, the Captain's object being to take the sheep which he was purchasing to New South Wales, in about three weeks' time, to add to the flock which he is rearing near Botany Bay, with a degree of success which promises to be of the greatest national importance.¹

Macarthur ignored Sir Joseph's warning; he was, in fact, the sale's heaviest buyer, bidding successfully for seven other sheep

ing, interested himself in sheep-breeding, and was the first to see the importance to the Australian economy of developing the production of fine wool. An inveterate quarreller and a merciless enemy of authority, he was the plague of successive governors and was finally sent by Governor King to England under arrest to face court martial for wounding his superior officer, Lieut.-Colonel William Paterson, in a duel. Through some trickery never explained, the indictment was lost *en route*; Macarthur was not brought to trial and used the visit as an opportunity to rouse government interest in the growth of fine wool in Australia. He returned to Sydney in 1805, not only with his rams and ewe from the King's flock, but with warm official support for his personal plans and a recommendation to the governor to grant him 5,000 acres of land in the locality known as the Cow Pastures and chosen by Macarthur himself. The Australian merino sheep industry grew from the flocks bred on this grant named Camden Park after his (and thus Australia's) benefactor, the Secretary of State. John Macarthur's deeds and misdeeds can be followed in the historical records of his period: a full assessment of his character and a full appreciation of Elizabeth, his wife, will now and for the first time be possible with the aid of the great mass of family papers recently presented to the Mitchell Library, Sydney, and at present being arranged by Miss Monica Flower, an authority on the history of early New South Wales.

¹ *Morning Chronicle*, quoted by *Bischoff*, pp. 358-66. *H.R., N.S.W.*, vol. v, pp. 463-4, gives the names of buyers, prices paid, and weight of fleeces at the last shearing.

with heavier fleece and presumably with two good eyes apiece, and paying for them from £11 to £28. 7s. each. The prices reached at the sale, said Banks, exceeded the King's and his own expectations, His Majesty never before having sold a Spanish sheep for more than six guineas. The sheep were to be allowed to stay three days or longer in the King's pasture, but their new owners were so eager to remove them that 'two or three carts appeared in the field in a few minutes, and were loaded with sheep, and one gentleman took his purchase away with him in his chaise'. Macarthur set off for Sydney with his precious eight, travelling in his own vessel called the *Argo* and decorated with a figurehead of the Golden Fleece. One ram died at sea, but six rams and one ewe landed safely, the first migrants to Australia from the King's flock.¹

How early Henty acquired his royal merinos is not positively known, but a prominent breeder—Youl of Van Diemen's Land, who knew and bought from Henty—has put it on record that it was about 1796. If this is so, Henty was among those farmers who successfully petitioned the King for gifts of merinos, distribution by sale not being contemplated until 1800. Whenever it was, after a number of years Henty made a name for himself as a breeder of Spanish sheep, becoming so consistent a winner of all prizes at agricultural shows that farmers would no longer compete against him. After that, his sheep were entered for exhibition only, and the prizes they drew were the orders from breeders who came to Tarring from distant parts of England to buy from his admired flocks. His merinos were his pride as well as a source of profit; he had never, he said, 'made an application to any Person to buy my sheep, a pretty plain proof that their merit alone being known, has brought me customers'. These words were written to a Surrey friend, one John Street, who had gone out as a settler to New South Wales in 1821.² It was Henty who had written for Street the letter of recom-

¹ *H. R., N.S.W.*, vol. v, pp. 674-5. One ram died after being landed, leaving 'in a very healthy state five rams and one ewe', as Governor King informed Banks. Later Macarthur himself gave the number bought from the Windsor flocks as nine (evidence before Commissioner Bigge, 1820). Spanish merinos had reached Sydney in July 1797, obtained from the flock of the late Colonel Gordon, Commander-in-Chief at Cape Colony (K. McC. Bowden, *George Bass*, pp. 47-48).

² John Street's family home was Birtley, a farm of 800 acres at Guildford, Surrey. He left England 5.11.21 in the brig *Thalia*, arriving at Sydney 27.4.22, aged forty-one. He met his future wife, Maria Wood Rendell, on board. Street died 13.4.53

mendation that was then necessary to secure the interest of authority at both ends of the world, a letter that described his friend to Sir Charles Burrell, M.P., as

a well-educated and well informed man of pleasing manners and whom I have known for 20 years. His principal object is to grow fine wool, which has answered there exceedingly well.

From Henty to Burrell, member of Parliament, and from Burrell to Bathurst, Secretary of State for the Colonies, and from Bathurst to Macquarie, Governor of New South Wales—in the early 1820's, a dozen years before the start of unrestricted free emigration, such were the necessary stepping-stones to a grant of land. When Street sailed he took with him a number of Henty's merinos; these so thrived upon his property on the Bathurst Plains that other breeders sent home requests for merinos from Henty's flock. As appears from Henty's letter, men with names now famous as pioneers in Australia's wool industry were among his buyers—Lawson, Cox, McIntyre, and, most famous of all, John Macarthur of Camden Park. In 1825 Macarthur applied for a four-year contract for all the young sheep Henty could spare, probably, as Henty surmised, for the Australian Agricultural Company. In 1826 a family group of Macarthur buyers visited Tarring, with results described by John's nephew, Charles Macarthur, to his brother-in-law, Captain Phillip King, R.N.:

We have purchased 30 Merino Ewes amongst us—they are taken from the flock of Mr. Henty, from whom Street purchased the sheep that have been so much approved in New South Wales. He allowed us to select from the whole flock, and was himself anxious to give of his best, in order to acquire a reputation in New South Wales, for possessing the best sheep in England; he is a very liberal man. We paid four guineas each for ewes and three guineas for 10 female lambs—he made us a present of a very good ram into the bargain.¹

Three long letters from Henty to John Street, written between 1822 and 1823, show something of the fluctuations of a farmer's

(*The Street Family*). Sir Phillip Street, a former Chief Justice of New South Wales, was a grandson of John and Maria Street, and the present Chief Justice, Sir Kenneth Whistler Street, is a great-grandson.

¹ Mitchell MS. Charles Macarthur (1792–1827), Lieut., R.N., nephew of John Macarthur and son of James Macarthur and his wife Catherine Hannibal Hawkins.

fortunes and of the beginning of Henty's feeling that it might be wise to move his family to the other end of the world. The letters bristle with questions as to agricultural conditions in New South Wales; they show that Henty watched the papers for colonial intelligence and was meeting colonial visitors of note and reading appropriate books. His sixth son, Edward, then fifteen, was anxious to go out; Henty told Street that he could not consider letting Edward go at present but might do so in two years' time. Meantime he plied his friend for information as to climate, crops, and pastures and their effect on horses and cattle and sheep—the results in terms of New South Wales wool he could sometimes see for himself at the rooms of the Arts and Sciences Society in London, where samples were displayed. Clearly, Henty had begun to dip tentatively in the moving stream of nineteenth-century colonization.

The letters were all written in the winter months, when farm work must end early and candles and fire-warmth invite conversation with friends, if only by means of a quill pen. The first of them, written from Field Place and addressed at a venture to John Street, Esquire, *A Free Settler*, Sydney or *Elsewhere*, New South Wales, Australasia, was written in January 1822, when the price of home-grown corn had fallen alarmingly and the spirits of farmers were therefore at a low ebb. In the Henty book-shelves was a copy of the reports made by a House of Lords committee in 1815 on *The Growth, Commerce and Consumption of Grain and all Laws relating thereto*, reports showing that by the year of Waterloo the situation of the small farmer and his labourer had become a matter for grave concern; for with falling prices and the importation of foreign corn, the small farmer could not go on paying the accepted wage; unemployment grew and production fell. The tale unfolds itself in the pages of the book, whose margins Henty marked in many places as he read: too well he knew the tale. In that year, an Essex farmer told the committee, the price of labour had

fallen upon the average three shillings per week per man, but not in proportion to the diminution in the price of corn; our men that used to be paid a guinea are paid now only eighteen shillings; those who used to be paid eighteen shillings are now paid fifteen shillings; and those who used to be paid fifteen shillings have now only twelve. I give my ploughman sixteen shillings per week, and house rent and

firing, which is equal to eighteen shillings. . . . We dropt our wages on account of the price of corn coming down, and many of the little farmers that used to employ three or four men are not able to employ more than two, which has thrown a great number of the lower class of labourers out of employ. Last Saturday fortnight I discharged seven men; one man with a family, in the parish, was an old workman, he has been round the country for many miles over Dengey hundred, and several others, and he had only two days' employment the whole time. I asked him the reason; he said, We could get work, but the farmers had no money . . . we have so many men now out of employment, that we could set them on at much lower wages if we chose to discharge our old men, which we do not choose to do; I believe I could have men at twenty-one pence a day; they cannot get any work.

The farmer was asked why he himself had discharged seven men last Saturday fortnight: he replied

I went into the field to pay the men, and one of them said, 'There is sixpence more that was for the day's work'. I said, 'I gave you notice this day fortnight that I should drop the wages on such a day, if you could get better employment you were quite welcome to go, only giving me a few days' notice'. One of them said, 'I do not know what we are going to do now, farmers are coming down with the prices of the work; however, there is a revolution at Norwich, and I hope we shall have a blaze here'. At that I discharged all of them directly, and told them I would not have any of those kind of men about me; and those men have been about the country, and have not been able to get any work since, for I informed my neighbours, and they would not set them on.

A Wiltshire witness, a man who, as Thomas Henty did, worked his own farm and rented others, said that if free importation of grain were allowed he would keep the land

as much as possible under grass and green crops, for I do not expect that wool will go down so rapidly as grain; I am at this moment cultivating fine wool as much as possible, and increasing my flock, instead of the cultivation of corn.

With this, Henty's pencil marked emphatic agreement; he himself was concentrating more and more upon fine wool. A page or two farther on in the report he scored the margin beside another statement that, whereas in former times a farmer would put all his six sons to farming, they were now in general

brought up to trade; in the experience of the Wiltshire witness: before the improvements were made in agriculture, and the farmers had become a higher class of men, they were all bred up farmers or labourers, according to the ability of the farmer to put them out: but now they are become a higher class, and have a greater connection with men in trade, they put their sons out to trade, where the profits on capital are higher. My advice to all farmers who have consulted me lately (and I have advised many) has been, to bring up their children to trade.

Henty applauded what was his own practice: in the next year, 1816, he sent his two eldest sons away from the farm, one into the family bank as a prelude to trade and one into the Navy.

While Wiltshire farmers followed the advice to put their sons to trade, Wiltshire labourers sought work in the cloth manufactories of Somerset, where by working from four in the morning until seven at night they could count on earning 22 shillings a week. So, over the next few years, the impoverished young men of both classes left the fields, and the fields were more and more left in grass.

In an attempt to help both grower and consumer, an Act was passed in 1815 providing that when home-grown corn fell below 80 shillings a quarter foreign grain was to be allowed in duty free; there was no provision for keeping the price up to 80 shillings, and in the year of Henty's letter to Street it fell to 38. Control had proved futile; economics outran the law. Small wonder that after the first friendly greeting Henty's letter reflected the consternation of the farming world.

The state of Agriculture is worse than when you were here, there is absolutely no sale for anything in the shape of Agricultural produce, I have not sold a Sheep or taken £20 for Corn. . . . Ruin stares the Farmer full in the face, and Rents are lowering all over the Kingdom, but this will not save the Farmers, unless prices are brought up, and I confess I now think there is no chance of it.

On the other hand,

Manufacturers are in full work, and the quarter's Revenue appears to be productive of a considerable excess over the quarter ending January 1821; this astonishes me, it is much beyond my expectation. We are in full expectation of a Property Tax being laid on when Parliament meets in Feby. . . . I see by the Papers Ships are advertised continually to take out Free Settlers to Van Diemen's Land and New

South Wales, and paragraphs are often inserted in the papers, evidently for encouraging emigration to Australasia—I hope my Friend you will find it everything you expect, and that success will ultimately attend you. It requires great courage to surmount the many difficulties and privations you necessarily will have to encounter, and nothing but *perseverance* and well husbanding your Money, Strict Economy at starting, and in fact great prudence, with the best management will enable you to retain that independence, so delightful, and so desirable in every sense of the word—I long to receive a letter from you, giving me *a very particular* account of the Country, but more particularly of the prospect for a Farmer with a pretty good stock of Agricultural Knowledge, Capital and Industry—I shall believe more from your opinion given than all the books I may read upon the subject. State the quantity of Cattle or Sheep usually kept per acre upon Land properly cultivated, and the produce of *Milk and Butter from a Cow, the sort of Horses*, and the sorts of Grasses in particular, especially how the English Grasses of Mr. M'Arthur succeeds, the size of his best Merino Sheep, as well as the quantity of the best Wooled Sheep there are, not forgetting or comparing their size and fineness of wool with mine and state the cause of his fleeces and the size of his sheep being so much lighter and smaller than mine. Also, the most proper Articles an Emigrant ought to take out, as well as the prices of Manufactured Goods of most descriptions at the time you write, the Import duties, and the quantity of Lands now to be allotted, as well as the quality, the Cow Pastures in particular.

He breaks off to give news of mutual friends, and then more questions occur to him. Had any more 'plains' lands been discovered and what sort of soil were they? Were the natives of those parts troublesome or said to be numerous? What had Street seen *en route* of Van Diemen's Land and what did he think of that country? Was a profitable Indian market likely to be found for the best blood horses? How did locally bred horses compare with the best English? Had Street seen any of Oxley's new discoveries from Port Macquarie into the interior?¹ Had Street or his sheep been much annoyed by the venomous reptiles? What would he think of a plan to send merinos out to Sydney to be sold there as a speculation? 'I flatter myself', he said, 'their reputation will, there as it does here, stand high.' He was not forgetful of the social side of life: what sort of sport

¹ John Oxley (1783–1828), naval officer, explorer, Surveyor-General of N.S.W., 1812–28, author of *Two Expeditions into the Interior of New South Wales* (Serle).

was there in hunting, shooting, and fishing? What kind of reception had Street got from the Governor? and 'Pray, how stands our friend Wentworth out in the Colony? He is, I think, a Man of Talent, but I should think from his book an oppositionist to the government there.'¹ That 'but' is perhaps an indication that Henty's temper was an easy one, not prone to revolution: if he raised his eyebrows over the Australian Radical, how did he feel about his pugnacious fellow countryman, the reformer Cobbett? However, he sends his remembrances to the oppositionist, who had stayed at Worthing and apparently visited Henty while there; sends thanks for Wentworth's book—*A Statistical, Historical and Political Description of New South Wales*—which its author had been so kind as to send him; and adds a message of greeting to another acquaintance, Dr. Robert Wardell, Wentworth's partner in the founding of the colony's first independent newspaper, *The Australian*.²

Plainly, Henty was becoming imbued with what Wentworth called 'the Spirit of Emigration'. Thinking of Street and his flocks, conscious of his own increasing burdens, convinced that 'a mighty field' lay before the colonial sheep farmer and that the growing of fine wool must be 'a Mine of Wealth for years to come', in this letter he expressed a heart-felt wish that he possessed 10,000 acres next to Street on the Bathurst Plains.

Henty finished his letter with a hope that he would not be thought inquisitive; his curiosity, he admitted, was excessive. Before the answers to his questions could reach him a whole year must elapse. The crops not yet sown would be harvested

¹ William Charles Wentworth (1792–1872), a great figure in the early political life of N.S.W., was the son of D'Arcy Wentworth and was born at Norfolk Island where his father had been sent as assistant-surgeon. He was educated in England and his discovery, while there as a young man, of the circumstances of his father's 'voluntary exile' and of his own birth are thought to have influenced his attitude to the emancipist question and other colonial problems, of which he took the radical view. His book, published in 1819, advocated migration to Australia rather than to America, Canada, or South Africa, and is considered to have had much influence. He was at Worthing in 1820 (Wentworth to Alexander Riley, 27.10.20, MS., *M.L.*) and visited Henty's farm (Henry Henty, MS. notes); in that year he wrote to his father that 'the spirit of Emigration to the Colony [of N.S.W.] is daily gaining ground'.

² Robert Wardell, LL.D. (1794–1834), 'an able journalist and excellent advocate who fought a great fight for liberty at an important period of development in Australia' (*Serle*). In Sept. 1843, while out riding one morning, Wardell was shot dead by one of three runaway convicts.

and the land ploughed again before Street's letters would be brought ashore at Penzance or Falmouth or Deal, to find their way to Worthing by galloping mail-coach and thence to Tarring on a horse's back. When at last the seals were broken the pages did not dispel Henty's dreams—dreams that were to grow into a plan and a decision.

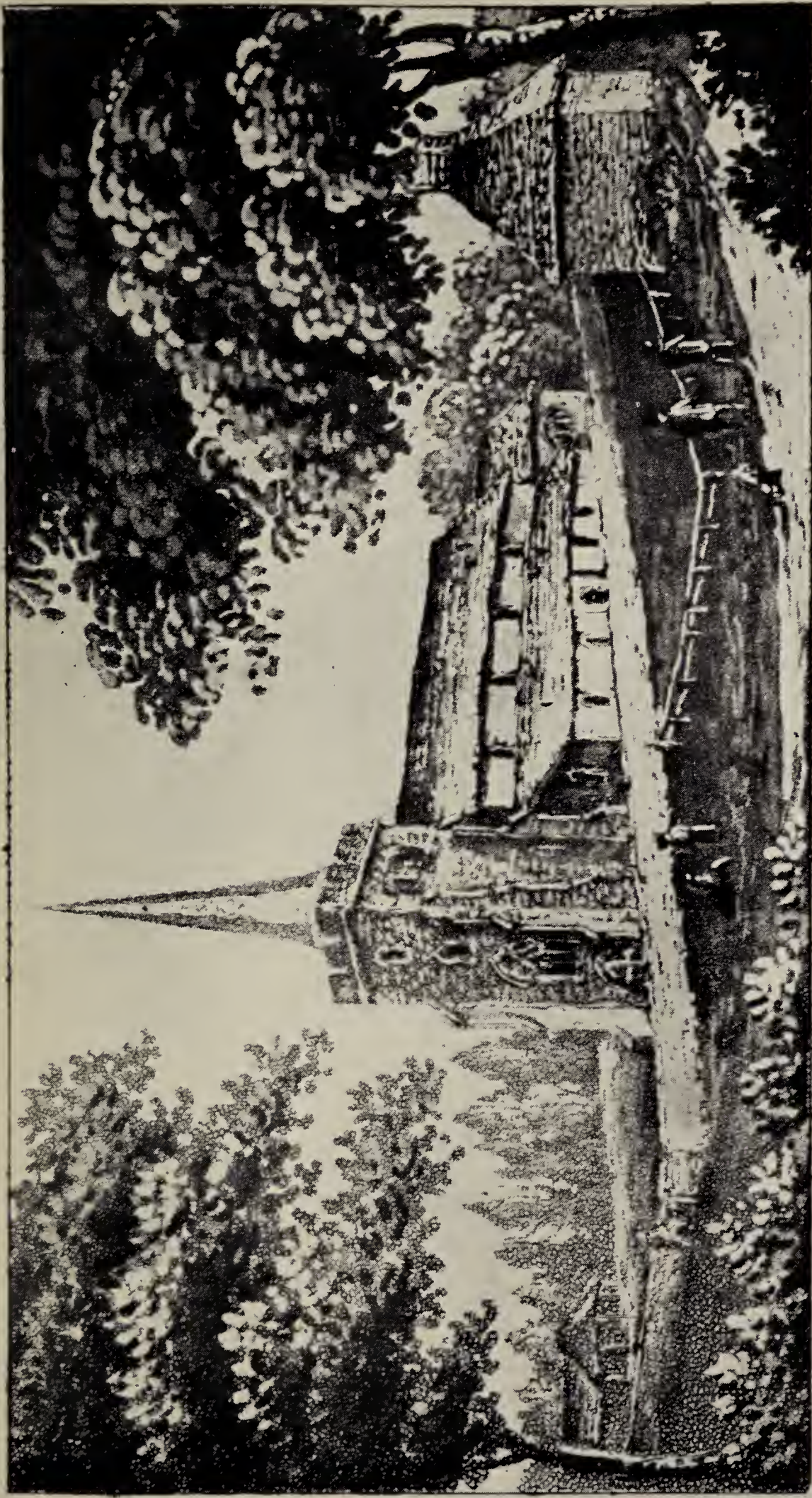
John Street's descendants have long wished in vain that these letters might be found. Recently one, but only one, has come to light in England among the papers belonging to grandchildren of William, Thomas Henty's third son. Written in December 1828, when it reached Thomas at the end of the following June, the *Caroline*, with three of his sons, had already sailed. In it Street had much to say of conditions in New South Wales. His account was not wholly good—frequent droughts and untimely frosts made agriculture uncertain, settlers were not given access to the newly discovered lands, the prices of stock had fallen low: but, he said, wool, fine wool, was the article that would save all those who would turn their attention to its improvement. Henty did not need reassuring about the worth of fine wool; and the tales of the colony's drawbacks must have left him happily undisturbed, for by now his plan of emigration had taken an unexpected turn.

THE SPIRIT OF EMIGRATION

AMONG the many questions in Henty's letters to John Street it is noticeable that there is none about the colonial supply of labour, convict or free. There is a reason for his lack of curiosity on this most important point. It had been obvious for some years that, if the position of the small landowner like himself was becoming more difficult, that of the landless peasant had long been one of utter misery. Gone were the peasant's age-old rights to graze a cow and a few geese and to cut turves from waste land: those waste lands that had given him food and money and self-respect had been taken from him to save the country from famine. Added to the acres of the large landowners, the enclosed fields grew more corn for England but meant less bread for the dispossessed peasant. The war years that had brought prosperity to his master added nothing to his own daily wage; even with full employment he could not earn more than a few shillings a week. When uncertain employment came with peace, the Poor Laws forbade him to move from his native parish to another where he might have expectation of finding work. Industry led him nowhere: his only hope of a competence was to turn smuggler, poacher, or thief.

Henty therefore did not need to ask where his labour would come from. He knew that, if and when the time came for him and his family to migrate, his shepherds and stockmen and servants would thankfully go with him to a new life in a new land. As for their women, what wife and mother who had never had more than a pittance to feed and clothe her family would not stifle her fears of a strange country if it promised her bacon and cheese and milk, and even meat, to put upon the table instead of potatoes, and potatoes alone?

Although Henty's inherited capital and the gains of war-time agriculture had moved him farther from the simple standards of his fathers and nearer to the leisured living of the larger landowners, he had not moved so far that he was out of sight of the degrading poverty, the hopeless dependence, of the landless



South West View of Tarring Church.

By permission of the Worthing Public Library Committee

4. ST. ANDREW'S, WEST TARRING, AND THE COLUMBARY

The Hentys' Parish Church

Aquatint by James Rouse, 1822



5. THE OLD TARRING FONT IN AN AUSTRALIAN GARDEN

peasants, those suffering fellow men who tilled his fields and lived at his very door. Ever since he had come to Tarring in the early years of those French wars that so hastened enclosure, the old village life of Sussex had been dying before his eyes. He was not the man to watch it without pity: had he been indifferent to the feelings of the obscure and illiterate he would not have concerned himself as he did with one Harry Cheesman, a shepherd whom he hired for Mr. Lawson of New South Wales and dispatched to his new master in 1825. Cheesman's case was typical of the time. Henty considered him excellent at his work and irreproachable in character, yet his earnings in Sussex cannot have been more than £20 a year, and unless he was fed from the farm kitchen he must always have been insolvent. In New South Wales he was to get £40 a year and board and lodging, but Henty was worried lest despite this affluence Cheesman should find himself unhappy; he appealed to his friend Street on Cheesman's behalf. 'I hear', he wrote,

he is to be in excellent hands, but should any difference arise I have given a line to you by him and I hope you will in that case take him by the hand for my sake, as in case of anything wrong the poor fellow will be in a miserable plight, and should he be anywhere near you, give me some news about him when you write again.

News of Cheesman came in that one surviving letter from Street: at the end of 1828 he was still with Lawson and was 'likely to do very well if he continued steady'; but, added Street, 'he is hardly (as they term it here) sufficiently *flash* to deal with the knowing ones. I fear they sometimes fleece him.'

No more letters remain of those that Thomas Henty wrote from Sussex to John Street in New South Wales. Any written after 1826 would surely have reported the burning of hay-ricks and the breaking of threshing machines, ominous signs that the hungry people of the southern counties were protesting at last against their intolerable lot. Henty himself was spared such ugly experiences, as later appears, but he could not stave off the increasing effects of the post-war depression, with low prices for farm produce, high taxation, and the heavy burden of rent and poor-rate and tithe. From among these gathering shadows migration gleamed like a lamp to show the way out.

In August 1828 Henty's eldest son, James, wrote to his

brother William to set before him fully the arguments in favour of a family move to New South Wales. William was then twenty years old and in Lewes studying law. The plan had evidently been canvassed between them before. The shrewd and cautious James, now a merchant and manager of the family bank at Worthing, apparently converted to the scheme by his more impulsive elderly father, in this letter aims at converting William in his turn. Financially, he asserts, it would be greatly to their advantage; socially, they would be able to continue a style of living that in England they could no longer afford. In fact, in England the outlook for them was more than uncertain; in New South Wales, despite inevitable and unfamiliar trials, he felt their future was assured. Street had not had much money, nor, in James's opinion, much drive, yet he had succeeded; what Street had done, James was convinced the Hentys could do much better. Their father and mother were determined on going; a slight qualm as to sister Jane's possible reluctance is dismissed; he assumes the willingness of the younger boys, Edward, Stephen, and John.

It is clear from this letter that the migration of the Hentys was due to economic causes and not to any quixotic spirit of adventure. The younger boys may have seen themselves—one hopes they did—galloping over the plains of New South Wales, tackling bushrangers, and sleeping out under the stars; but with the older ones, closer to the time for making a home of their own, it was the need to earn money that induced them to leave England. For their parents, if they could have considered themselves and Jane alone, their capital would have been more than enough to allow them to remain, but for the family's sake they had made up their minds to break with their past and begin again overseas. 'After mature deliberation', James begins—and one can be sure that he never reached a decision in any other way—

I have almost come to the conclusion that New South Wales will do more for our family than England ever will, considering the means we have to commence business with. I have had several conversations with Father upon it since I saw you and the more I think of it the more does it appear to me likely to answer our purpose. Father says he has no doubt he can land in New South Wales with £10,000 independent of Freighting a Ship out, Stock, both Sheep and Horses and other investments—if so, with that, we might be enabled very

soon to get a large Stock and Farm on a most extensive scale if we thought it desirable when we got there. What can we do in England with £10,000 amongst all of us. It would be quite impossible for me to carry on the Bank and my other business in both of which we have at this time full £4000 locked up and it is out of the question to suppose we can continue that sum for any period even if it produced a good return but as it does not do that any argument for its continuance falls to the ground. I have mentioned it to Charles and he seems impressed with the same opinion as myself. Look at his situation, as manager of the bank at Arundel, which is held on the most uncertain tenure imaginable for unless banking improves I can imagine very few of our present firm will be disposed to continue it and if not what becomes of him. It would be idle to suppose he can live many years longer on less than £200 a year, brought up as we all have been unless indeed we chose to descend many steps in the scale of Society and which our feelings could ill stand, having at the same time an opportunity of doing as well and perhaps considerably better in New South Wales, under British Dominion and a fine climate. Next, yourself. What I should propose is that you should finish your professional education in this country and then of course have the option of coming out or not as you might think best. Sydney is an improving town and likely to afford business to a respectable man with good connections or if that did not turn out—well, the Land is open to you, almost all persons there are Agriculturalists in some shape, and we shall of course secure a Grant for each whether they go out or not. What have we to care for in England but our own family. . . . I have made up my mind to one thing. If Father and Mother go, I do. I cannot be separated from them at that distance particularly as I agree with Father in the policy of the undertaking and my presence might be of consequence and tend more to the comfort of the whole. Jane might at first feel some uneasiness at going but if we decide upon it as being the most beneficial thing for us all, she will soon get over it, particularly when she finds Mother's determination fixed. I can have no other feeling than that of doing all in my power to benefit the whole of us and I am convinced that spirit actuates us all. How many thousands are there who go to India for twenty years certain in a pestilential climate under a burning sun and for what? Why, to secure themselves (if they live) £400 or £500 a year for the remainder of their lives in England. At the expiration of 10 years in New South Wales I shall be much disappointed if we individually are not worth double that sum, arising from the accumulation of our Stock and our annual exports to England. For the first year or two we shall have to endure privations and hardships which

we have not been accustomed to in England. What of that? Look at Street—an instance before us of what a man even with little energy and small capital can do. He is now possessed of 2000 acres of fine land, 1600 sheep and 200 cattle, a House and all the comforts (to use his own words) he can either expect or desire. Our situation as compared with his will be vastly superior we go out with 12 or 13 times the amount of capital he did, our name is already well known in the Colony, and immediately we get there we shall be placed in the first Rank in Society, a circumstance which must not be overlooked as it will tend most materially to our comfort and future advantage. Our expectations, however, ought not to be raised too high. I perhaps look too much on the gloomy side of a question, which has become almost habitual with me from endeavouring to check Father's sanguine calculations upon almost every subject. If therefore I err on that point it is erring on the right side. If we decide upon going it must be '*una voce*' and the Fable of the Unbreakable Bundle of Sticks should be constantly before us and upon that must we found our system of acting. United we can be of infinite service to each other; separated we can do comparatively nothing. We should form a society among ourselves. Our amusements would be in sporting and improving our estates and our business growing fine wool and breeding blood horses for both of which we have good markets.

Very soon after this, the decision was made: they would go to Australia. But it was to be to a part of Australia unknown as yet to James, or to anyone else planning to migrate. In Thomas Henty's letters to Street all his questions had concerned New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land; it could not be otherwise, because on that enormous continent, still known as New Holland, no other settlements existed at the time. Then rumours of French designs on the unoccupied west coast—the New Holland of the Dutch explorers—stirred the British Government to establish itself there and for the first time to lay formal claim to all of the continent outside the boundaries of New South Wales. Things now moved quickly: only four months after the date of his letter to William, James was able to mention to Street a possible third place for that family settlement on which he told Street the Hentys were now determined. They had, said James, come to the resolution of directing their future efforts to Australia, having

decided on employing our Capital in a New Quarter of the World

where we hope to do it to much greater advantage—we have not decided yet, where we shall fix ourselves, nor shall we probably do so until our arrival in the Colony. The New Settlement at Swan River becomes of more importance every day; Government has now decided on it and commissioned a Ship the 'Sulphur' bomb to take out the Governor Capt. Sterling (late of H.M.S. Success) he is to be wholly independent of the Governor of New South Wales. The Settlement is not intended to be penal, as no convicts are to be sent; some think this will be a drawback to its early colonization; others that it will be a great inducement to voluntary emigration. The Swan River is very little out of the track for Vessels from England to Hobart Town and many of them will no doubt touch and leave on the Passage out; the Navigation back I am told is rather difficult, so much so, that a Ship which could run down in a fortnight, could not get back in less than 5 or 6 weeks. It will take considerable time before we can all get away, one or two may make a start first with a portion of the stock, as we intend to take out a large quantity of Sheep and Horses, and the others follow with the remainder.

On 17 January 1829 Stirling's approaching departure for Swan River was announced on the leader-page of *The Times*. Captain and Mrs. Stirling, with a young child, were to travel in the hired transport *Parmelia*, 449 tons, taking a number of artificers and their families, and stores for the future settlement. H.M.S. *Sulphur*, their escort, was to carry out a garrison from the 63rd Regiment, with their wives and children. Private settlers, said *The Times*, were fitting out ships to follow with all speed. Regulations were published on another page 'for the guidance of those who may propose to embark, as settlers, for the new settlement on the coast of New Holland'.

Perhaps the Hentys were not regular readers of *The Times*; at any rate, Thomas's attention was called to this interesting information by his lord lieutenant, old Lord Egremont. One of Egremont's own sons was said to be going out and Wyndham and Henty plans had evidently been mutually discussed.¹ The

¹ The *Morning Chronicle*, quoted in the *Sydney Gazette*, 1.8.30, stated that 'several branches of the nobility intend to go out and settle, amongst others the Hon. Mr. Windham, second son of Lord Egremont'. Colonel Wyndham changed his mind: among *Henty Family Papers* is an attested copy of Under-Secretary Hay's answers to inquiries made by Wyndham as to the Government's intention to compensate capitalists for the cost of removing themselves and their labourers to New South Wales or Van Diemen's Land 'in the event of the place not being tenable for any political cause'—i.e., through prior occupation by the French. Hay dismissed

terms for grants of land to settlers, as set out in *The Times*, were reprinted in the form of a hand-bill; Henty's own neatly folded copy is preserved in Australia today. From it, he was able to calculate that if he or his sons could reach Swan River before the end of the current year, 1829, his capital would entitle him to 80,000 acres of land.¹ The Hentys' forebears had never been without land, but theirs had been acres in modest numbers. The bait of 80,000 acres must have been too much: they abandoned all thought of going to New South Wales, of emulating and surpassing John Street on the Bathurst Plains, and in good faith committed their fortunes to a region almost wholly unknown.

Wyndham's suggested compensation—acre for acre—as 'upon far too liberal a scale'; it was 'impossible to say what quantity of Land it would be thought proper to award'. This information was given to the Hentys in a copy certified by P. Roberts, 'Half-pay Deputy Assistant Commissary General, late Agent to Colonel Wyndham', but did not discourage them.

¹ The time limit was extended on 20.7.30 to the end of that year. The rules were again altered on 1.3.31.

Part II

ENGLAND TO BRAZIL

1829



I

ENGLAND TO BRAZIL

IF the Hentys were to reach Swan River in time to claim their land, there was much to be done. James was to go first, taking with him the seventeen-year-old Stephen, John, nearly sixteen, and everything necessary to begin life as farmers and pastoralists overseas. Their parents were to sell the farm, wind up the family affairs, and follow with the rest. A ship was chartered, the *Caroline*, teak-built, copper-bottomed, with a poop deck for the cabin passengers and an experienced captain who had just brought the ship back from Van Diemen's Land and Batavia.¹ The cottagers were set to work to make flannel coats for the famous merinos; blood horses were chosen from the Egremont stud;² a whitesmith, a carpenter, shepherds,

¹ The ship *Caroline*, sometimes erroneously called a brig, was built at Cochin, India, by John Crookenden and registered at the Port of Calcutta 21.11.25 as No. 43 in 1825. She had two decks, three masts, square rig, standing bowsprit, square stern, carvel build with quarter galleries and a woman's bust figurehead. Her owners at the time of the Henty voyage were William Chapman, banker, Newcastle upon Tyne, and Eliot MacNaghten, gentleman, of Calcutta (information from the Registrar-General of Shipping and Seamen). Many vessels of the time bore the name of the Queen, a sign of popular support for her in her disputes with the much-disliked George IV; but Lloyd's Register has established the Hentys' *Caroline* as the same vessel whose earlier story is told by Ida Marriott in *The Voyage of the Caroline from England to Van Diemen's Land and Batavia in 1827-8*; her captain for the homeward half of that journey being James Fewson, who, next voyage, took the Hentys out to Swan River.

² Egremont stock bought by the Hentys and listed in the *Stud Book*, vol. iii, 1832, as sent to Swan River, were:

Young Wanderer	black colt by Wanderer out of Ogress
Octavia	black filly by Whalebone out of Blacking
Merino	„ „ „ „ Vicarage

and stockmen, nearly all old employees of the family, were signed on to serve Thomas Henty, gentleman, or his agents, as dutiful servants for five years in return for a free passage, twenty pounds a year, fuel, and board.¹

Petworth black filly by Whalebone out of Vicarage
 Whalebone brown colt „ „ Blacking
 Sir John was in addition to the above; Canopy may have been a cart mare.

¹ Those who sailed with James in the *Caroline* were:

George Hills	aged 38	} General servants to Mr. Henty
Mary Ann Hills	38	
Mary Ann Hills	13	
George Hills	12	
John Chipper	23	} Labourers to Mr. Henty
Mary Chipper	20	
Charles Gee	32	
Mary Ann Gee	22	
Charles Gee	12	
Joseph Gee	10	
William Gee	6	
Walter Gee	4	
Alfred Gee	9 months	
George Rewell	28	
Jane Rewell	31	} General servants to Mr. Henty
William Rewell	4	
Ann Rewell	10 months	
George Bushby	27	
Mary Bushby	23	
William Bushby	3	
Richard Bushby	2	
Benjamin Sandford	28	
Frances Sandford	33	
William Sandford	9	
Charles Sandford	6	
John Sandford	4	
Stephen Sandford	1	
Robert Price	21	
Daniel Patterson	27	
William Dyer	21	
— Barnden	31	
Richard Haybittle	16	
T. W. Goble	22	

All of these were from West Tarring (*The General Muster Book, Perth: III H.R.A.*, vol. vi, pp. 634–5). Tarring Church records show that the Chippers of the sixteenth century were its chief minstrels. It is said that there has been a George Chipper in Tarring for the last 500 years; when Thomas Henty sailed in 1831 it was the current George Chipper who drove the sheep to Deptford to be put on board the vessel (information from Mr. Henfrey Smail, historian of Worthing, from the reminiscences of an old Worthing identity, the late Mr. Horace Mitchell). An old farm not far from Tarring Church is known locally as Chipper's Castle; there are still a number of Chippers in the neighbourhood. The present descendants of John and

James went up and down between Worthing and London, seeing to the business of fitting out the *Caroline*, then in the newly opened St. Katherine's Dock, and to the buying and packing of the great variety of goods they were to take. Besides three chests of clothes for each of the three Hentys and the one large chest of household linen for the servants and labourers, there were casks of wheat and turnip seed, seeds for the garden, boxes of vines, and fruit-trees and bushels of seed potatoes; two harrows, farm carts, and extra wheels; ladders, harness, and saddles; dairy utensils; pistols, powder-horns, and a double-barrelled shotgun; 2 barometers and 2 thermometers; telescopes and a bugle; 10 pounds of shaving soap, a cruet stand, and 30 silver spoons; pens, ink, and paper, and a hundred books.¹

Jane's album reflects the mood of farewell that prevailed in these last weeks. On one page, Stephen's perfect hand inscribes a poem beginning 'When forc'd to part from those we love. . . . To part perhaps for ever'; on another, Dr. Jeremiah Cloves, a Worthing visitor and Jane's most assiduous contributor, persuades Jane to put a brave face on it and make the coming parting a cheerful one.² 'To Miss Henty', he writes, 'on the departure of her Brothers for the Swan River Settlement.'

Here's success to the Settlers! God bless them!
May their voyage be happy and fine,
Nay! no tears—come pledge me a bumper
To the trim and good ship *Caroline*.

'Tis true that they sail far away,
May meet with privation and toil,
But the clime that they seek is delightful
And will soon give them Corn, Wine and Oil.

For the foliage is there evergreen,
The fields ever sunny and bright,

Mary Chipper are well-known members of the business community of Perth, Western Australia.

¹ List of property shipped by Mr. Henty from Tarring, 1829 (*W.A. Arch.*). Other goods were to follow in the *Wanstead* and were expected to be available at Swan River soon after the *Caroline*'s own arrival. *Wanstead*'s six months' voyage is described by Jane Roberts in *Two Years at Sea*.

² Dr. Jeremiah Cloves was a London physician and regular winter resident of Worthing. The house he built there is illustrated in *The Worthing Map Story*, Edward Snewin and Henfrey Smail (1949), pp. 64 and 166; see also *Glimpses of Old Worthing*, Henfrey Smail (1945).

Their mornings are fair and serene,
And cool and delicious the night.

They go with good wishes from all,
With the prayers of those that they love,
With confidence strong in their hearts
And a trust in sure help from above.

Then success to the Settlers, God Bless them,
May their passage be speedy and fine,
Come, cheer up and fill me a bumper!
Here's the Stout, Gallant Ship *Caroline*!

As well as at the farm, there must have been a great stir in the neighbourhood, for Tarring was to lose nearly fifty of the men, women, and children from the few hundred that comprised the whole parish. The idea of travel was no longer outside their comprehension, thanks to the frequent sight of mail coaches dashing along the roads; but a few days behind English coach horses was one thing, a voyage of months to an unknown land was quite another. They ventured only because of their confidence in the Hentys and in the hope that the strange new life would be more rewarding than the old.

During May 1829 persons scanning the shipping notices in *The Times* read the following advertisement:

For the New Settlement at Swan River, and will touch at Rio Janeiro, the fast-sailing and newly coppered poop ship *Caroline* A burden 400 tons armed with carriage guns. This vessel has very superior accommodation for passengers, having seven feet between decks. The whole of the vessel being nearly engaged, such persons who may wish to avail themselves of this conveyance are required to make an early application to James Henty, Esq., West Tarring, Worthing, or 5 Arundel Street, Strand; Henry Dod and Son, Mark Lane, or to George Bishop, 28 Jewry St., Aldgate.

On 2 June the *Caroline* went out of St. Katherine's Dock. Aboard her were five of the cabin passengers, some of the labourers and their wives, and the plants and animals in their care—cart-horses, cows and a bull, sundry pigs and poultry, rabbits and hunting dogs, and five of Lord Egremont's horses, Sir John, Young Wanderer, and the mares Canopy, Petworth, and Merino; the sheep were to be put aboard off Littlehampton to save the trouble of driving them to London. As the *Caroline*

moved down the river loaded with trusses of feed, she looked to the watchers like a floating haystack; her decks were further encumbered with barrels of water and hen-coops among the hay bales, and, curiously quartered in the long boat, two milch cows.

Descriptive notes of the ship's call at Littlehampton were made at the time by William Henty, the son who was studying law.¹ According to William, Littlehampton, that first week of June, was all bustle; so many friends of the Hentys had come to the little port to wish them goodbye that it was like a fair: Mrs. Sparks, landlady of the New Inn, said it was the gayest time she had ever known.² The *Caroline*, making a quick passage from the Thames, was seen off Worthing on the evening of the 4th, but while tacking off Lancing she ran aground and had to wait for the tide to float her off. During the night she dropped down to Littlehampton, anchoring in the morning six miles out. Here she awaited the sheep, the rest of the people, and her clearance by the customs officers at Arundel.

Whilst the Hentys were busy getting the sheep aboard, the morning papers were brought to them with the news that Lord Egremont's Frederick, full brother of Sir John, had won the Derby Stakes at Epsom the day before: up went Sir John's value and, William says, up went the spirits of the party to match.

The merinos, 150 bleating sheep, newly shorn and rugged in flannel against the cold, were now safe aboard, but the labourers and their families were still to come; also the customs officers still dallied over their documents, to the irritation of the Hentys. That night the gaiety of the New Inn was not for the brothers Charles, William, and John; with some of their friends they slept aboard the *Caroline*. At three o'clock in the morning a lighter came alongside with the people, weary, sea-sick, and stifled after a long night in what was no better than a covered barge. They and their baggage were at once put into the ship; the women at last could set down their children from their aching arms: flagging spirits revived. At eight o'clock William and John, with the ship's captain, James Fewson, left in the

¹ *Henty Family Papers*.

² Littlehampton's New Inn, a Georgian flint and brick building in Norfolk Road, still exists and has been scheduled for preservation. Worthing also had its New Inn, whose landlady was another Mrs. Sparkes (information, Henfrey Smail).

long boat for the shore six miles away over the rough sea. By midday, the business all done, Thomas Henty, with his sons and Captain Fewson, got into a boat at the mouth of Littlehampton Harbour: the moment had come. James, one foot in the boat, called out goodbye and jumped in. To a cry of 'Good luck to ye!'¹ the boat sailed off: the first strand was cut.

As they approached the ship Fewson hailed the mate to heave the anchor and it was up before they were aboard. With the first sail hoisted and quick goodbyes already said, Thomas and the boys looked out for their boatman to take them ashore. Where had he got to? There was the wretch, dropping astern, oblivious to repeated hails, waiting until the Hentys would be obliged to offer him double money to take them back. Other Littlehampton boats had gone; only one boat was left, a Worthing craft crowded with visitors and with the relatives of the labourers; the *Caroline* was moving and the Hentys, says William, were all off on the Swan River voyage together. Their chaises and horses and many of their friends were awaiting them at Littlehampton; they had had nothing to eat since breakfast and it was now three o'clock; but, rather than satisfy the rascal from Littlehampton, Thomas bundled his party into the Worthing boat. The episode had cut across their last moments together; the parting was over and they stood on different decks. Faces from the crowded boat looked up, seeking faces searching for a last glimpse of their own. Three cheers were given for the settlers; cheers from both sides continued as long as the figures could be distinguished on the *Caroline's* deck. A north-east wind bore her steadily away under a grey sky; they watched her round the Ore Lights: soon after, she was gone.

Thomas Henty had taken care to make a bargain with the boat's captain before leaving the *Caroline's* deck; once they were aboard, 'a decent bribe' induced the captain to alter his course for Littlehampton. With the wind off-shore, they did not land there until nine o'clock: six hours to cover the six miles. 'We all dined together at the New Inn', says William, 'and that evening the place was quite cleared of its visitors.' His notes do not

¹ The cry came from an unexplained 'old Captain Penfold' who rode up on his pony. There was a marriage connexion between the Hentys and the Penfolds, some of who were later to found one of the chief wine-making businesses of South Australia.

mention his mother or his sister Jane, but they are unlikely to have been absent from the party at the New Inn on this momentous day.

For many of the old people of Worthing and Tarring it had been a day of final parting with their sons and daughters, truly terrible for those parents who could neither read nor write. For Thomas Henty and his wife it had not been final; for them, the departure of the *Caroline* with James, Stephen, and John had meant, not an end, but a beginning; it was the first step in a plan that Thomas had advocated and his wife approved. Nevertheless, the excitement over, they must have felt at least subdued. There could be no word from Swan River for nearly a year; what might not happen to one of the boys before then? James, certainly, was competent and steady as a rock; but Stephen was bold and adventurous and very young, and John, still younger, not very robust—how would the long voyage and the expected privations affect him? For Thomas, the day of bustle and repeated boat journeys had been exhausting and perhaps when their candles were at last extinguished he slept at once: but Mrs. Henty's small-hour thoughts, reaching out to the *Caroline*, probably persisted in the dark and chiefly on account of John.

In fine weather the heavily laden ship lumbered through the Atlantic on her way to Rio. A week after leaving Littlehampton, the passengers, cabin and steerage, found their sea-legs. Life at sea had already become natural to the sixty-five people who were to be cooped within the *Caroline's* teak walls for the next four months. Two sets of letters exist to tell the tale of the voyage and of life in the earliest years at the Swan; one, in the possession of the Mitchell Library, consists of letters from James's fellow passenger, Henry Camfield, and the other, recently found among family papers in England, is a package of twenty letters from James Henty himself. These are all either to his father, the head and centre of the family plan, or to William, to whom James looked for support for his own views of the plan when they were changed by experience. Those to his father were obviously for the whole family and nearly all of them end with James's kind love to his 'Dear Mother, to Jane and all the lads'. Thomas kept them until his own departure from England and then, presumably, handed them to William for safe keeping; fortunately they have survived, with those to William himself.

The years have discoloured their outer pages that still retain the broken seals, black or red, and are endorsed with the name of the ship that carried them; some have English postmarks that show the port where they arrived; others, carried home by obliging ship's captains or passengers, carry no sign of having passed through a post office at either end of the world. The letters' close lines are in a hand that is vigorous but difficult to read, and often made more obscure by being 'crossed'; but when the mazy pattern is penetrated the tale emerges clear and so does the forthright character of the writer himself. The letters of Henry Camfield confirm and often amplify those of James.

Camfield was a young Kentish man of twenty-nine whose seventeenth- and eighteenth-century forebears had dwelt in a moated manor house called Groombridge Place. Shrinking fortunes had driven his father to one of the estate farms, where he and his family lived in a modern house, Burrswood, set among fields and orchards and hop gardens beside the little river Medway and about three miles from Tunbridge Wells. Henry Camfield was now taking what capital he had and two of his labourers and their wives to Swan River, hoping to find there the modest competence no longer produced by farming a small estate at home.¹ Before the *Caroline* voyage he and the Hentys, it seems, had not been closely acquainted: now migration had begun to weave their lives together and in the end the two families were to be closely linked. He had expected to enjoy himself and so far was not disappointed; he liked the ship, the crew, and the idle life. They breakfasted, he said, at nine, dined at three, drank tea at eight, and went to bed at ten. Nobody quarrelled or drank; everybody ate and slept a great deal. There was Samuel Talbot, aged thirty, with yellow hair and a yellow tuft on his chin; Spencer Trimmer, twenty-five, son of a noted Sussex breeder of merino sheep: these two, like the three Hentys and Camfield, were officially described as agriculturists. Then there was William Everard, thirty-four, a naval officer on half-pay with 'very grisly mustachoes'; Alfred Stone, twenty-eight, a solicitor and a good shot, whose mustachoes were black;

¹ *Henty Family Papers* and information from Mr. David Bruce, late factor of the last owner and resident of Burrswood. Camfield's servants were Frederick Friend and his wife Frances, with their child Mary Ann, and William Smith and his wife and son William, a boy of nine, both families from Spidhurst, Kent. Friend, a labourer, could not write; Smith, a carpenter, was able to sign his indenture.

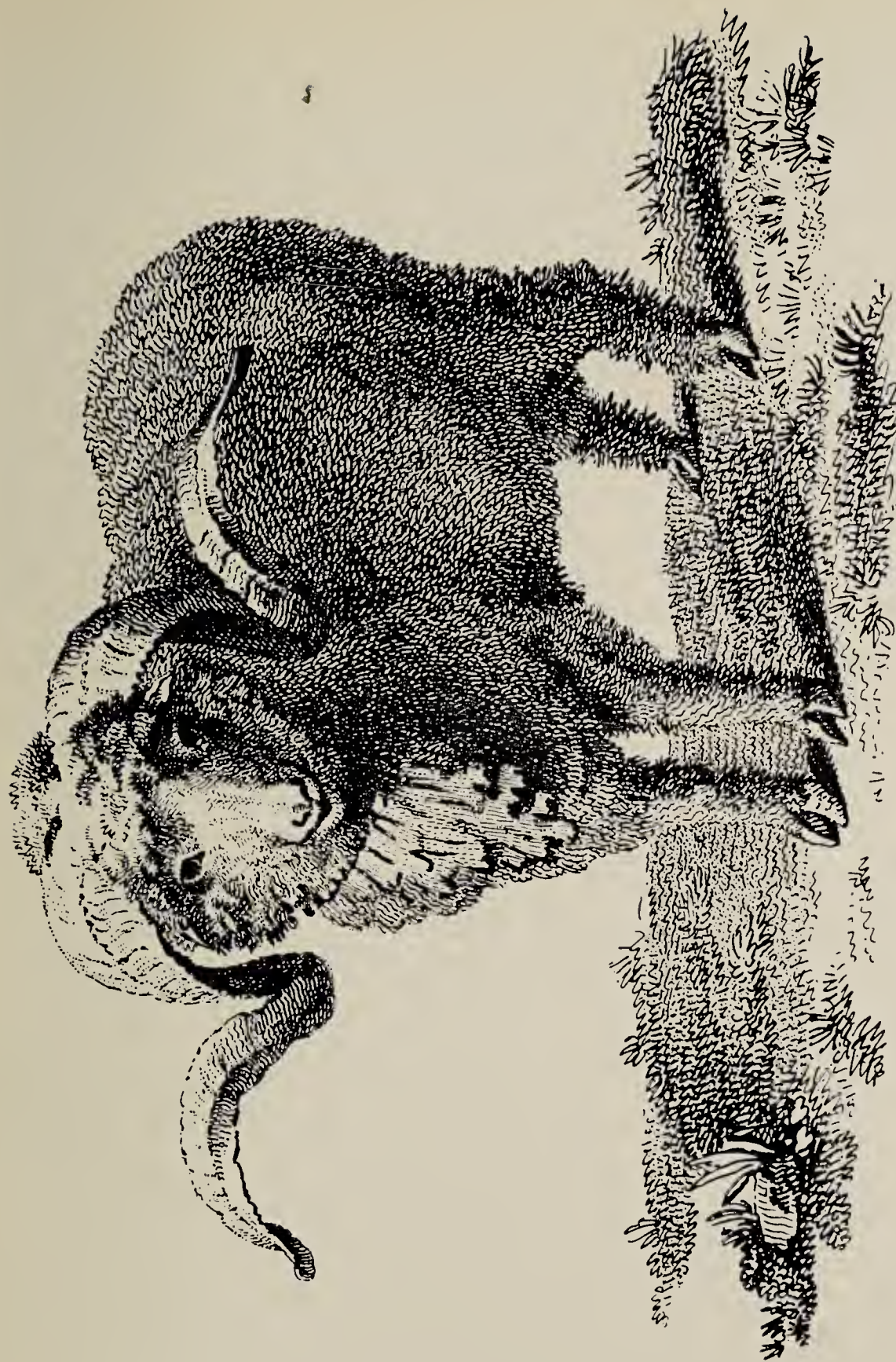
William Mackie, twenty-nine, from India, a lawyer by profession and a man of parts; Robert Morrough [Morrah],¹ who kept his cabin very neat, dressed nicely, swore fluently, and talked coaches as a young man today will talk cars; and a nondescript John Hawkins, of whom apparently there was nothing to be said. All the men were unmarried, and, probably by design of the prudent James, there were no ladies travelling out to their menfolk at the Swan—a lack that proved of great advantage in the tropics as the men were thus free to remove their coats.

They all seemed to get on well together. In readiness for the hot weather they turned the poop into a tailors' bench, stitching at trousers cut out of canvas by Captain Fewson, who sold the material to the passengers at 1s. 6d. a yard. For exercise they danced quadrilles and waltzed with each other for want of the partners left behind. On moonlight nights they walked the poop—a dozen paces forward, a dozen paces back; on fine days there was practice-shooting at boobies, and the daring, Camfield among them, showed their prowess by climbing high above the deck, tying a bottle to the yard-arm and returning to the deck to shoot at it from below; in moments of even greater valour they plucked a feather from the vane on the main top gallant mast. There might be no ladies in 'the cabin' to show off to, but Henry Camfield, writing his letters home, could be sure of admiring exclamations from his unmarried sisters Bessie, Maria, and Matilda Susannah. Henry's mother was dead; it was his sisters who had baked for him the ginger-bread meats that still tasted of home weeks later, when the thermometer stood at eighty degrees and the *Caroline* sailed at 6½ knots through a deep blue sea. A sister's fingers had embroidered the 'pretty work-bag' that helped him to sew on his bachelor's buttons; they had between them packed his clothes chest so beautifully that he hated to disturb its symmetry to get at his books—he had, however, dug deep enough to find that his atlas had been forgotten, and he begged them to look for it among their music in the drawing-room at home.

¹ Robert Morrah, son of Mr. Michael Morrah, surgeon, of Worthing; Mr. Henfrey Smail tells a number of anecdotes of the father in his Worthing books. Samuel Talbot's birthplace is given as Liverpool, Spencer Trimmer's as Ealing, William Everard's as Barnes, Alfred Hawes Stone's as Tunbridge Wells (*III H.R.A.*, vol. vi, pp. 629–30).

Among the list of things that Camfield liked were the three Henty brothers, James, Stephen, and John; they were, he said, very good-hearted well-disposed young men, James at times having much to try his temper but getting through it all admirably. With all his responsibilities as charterer of the ship, life at sea was not the carefree interlude for James Henty that it was for Henry Camfield. Chartering a ship was an expensive business. Charter parties—that is, contracts—varied in their terms, and there is no record of the one between James Henty and the *Caroline's* owners. The *Brighton Gazette*, reporting the departure of the three Mr. Hentys for Swan River after long and extensive preparations, names the amount to be paid per ton a month for the use of the ship as £5. The hire rate for the *Parmelia's* voyage to the Swan was £4. 10s. per ton a month;¹ on the same basis, for the hire of the *Caroline* from May to November, James would have paid more than £7,000. Of this he would have recovered very little in fares, since most of the accommodation was taken up for his own party; passengers not in his party, it can be assumed, paid him at the prevailing rates of £65 to £70 for cabin passengers and £25 to £30 for steerage, with a scale for children under fourteen graded according to age and diminishing to no charge at all for children under two. It is reasonable to suppose that the hire-rate covered the whole of the ship's costs—wages, harbour dues, interest and depreciation, and owners' profits; but provisioning was a separate matter. In the case of the *Parmelia*, and of the *Caroline* on her previous voyage under charter to the Van Diemen's Land Company, the charterer was responsible for victualling the passengers; and from internal evidence it is clear that this was so in the case of James Henty and the *Caroline*. Passengers' rations on a generally accepted scale were normally bought through the ship's agents and issued by the captain during the voyage. Some agents were honest, some were not; captains, if they were unscrupulous, could, and often did, deprive the passengers of the food that was their due, and at sea there was no redress. The *Caroline's* agents, Henry Dod & Son, were said to be one of two firms who could be trusted to put the right quantity and quality of food on board; James makes no criticism of supplies, except to wish that there

¹ *Parmelia*: J. Lachlan's tender to Captain Stirling, 23.12.28 (*III H.R.A.*, vol. vi, p. 597).



6. MERINO RAM GIVEN TO ARTHUR YOUNG BY KING GEORGE III, 1791

From a Print in the British Museum



7. PRIZES FOR MERINO SHEEP AWARDED TO THOMAS HENTY,
1817, 1818, and 1821



8. PRIZE FOR MERINO EWES AWARDED TO THOMAS
HENTY, 1821

were a larger proportion of pork instead of the beef that 'the people' would not eat: but charterer and captain soon crossed swords. James never lost his respect for Fewson as a seaman and nowhere charges him with actual dishonesty, but he found him at least careless in his accounts and generally neglectful of his part of the bargain: 'I have been obliged', wrote James,

to shew him I am not exactly a commonplace passenger on board; it requires, however, all our attention (John, Stephen and myself) to look after our interest and I assure you it is none the worse for being looked after. I am exceedingly glad I have got an optional agreement with the Captain respecting his remuneration as it keeps him in check and obliges him to study our interest more than he otherwise would do.

It was a difficult position for both men. If Fewson had hoped that the *Caroline's* charterer would turn out to be easy-going he had mistaken his man; James was not built to take his responsibilities lightly or to suffer gladly in others the slipshod methods he would have thought inexcusable in himself. Even if he had not been the stickler for precision that he was, it was his obvious duty to watch not only his family's interests but the welfare of his own people and of those others who had paid him their fares and must have looked to him as their protector while at sea.

So he kept tally of the provisions used for cabin and steerage passengers—the biscuit, the fresh and salt beef and salt pork, the dried pease, the sugar, flour, butter, and tea, the suet, oatmeal, and rice, the plums, and vinegar and rum. These were the commodities provided for everyone. In addition, the passengers in 'the cuddy' had hams, tongues, cheeses, and salt fish, soups, and eggs, and various pickles and spices for disguising the unpalatable salt meat.¹ One lazy morning, when the empty ocean provided a letter-writer with no real news, Camfield records

¹ J. R. Gooch, *The New Settlement at the Swan River*, pp. 55, 68; published in London and undated, but from the context written during 1829–30. Gooch, recommended as having been 'actively engaged for the first 28 years of his life on the Indian Seas, and visiting the various colonies there', aimed to protect the unwary emigrant from unscrupulous ship-owners and told him what he was entitled to and what pitfalls to avoid in taking his passage. Gooch says (p. 68) that 'the Cabin passenger requires no information on the subject [of extras supplied on board] as the Captain's table, if he is a generous man, and has liberal owners, is always amply supplied with fresh meat, fowls, wine, liquors, etc.: he has as good cheer as can be obtained by a person living on shore at the rate of one thousand pounds a year'.

that there had been anchovies for breakfast, new rolls, mutton fry, and eggs; again, in the tropics, when they were becalmed, 'meat pudding for dinner yesterday!' he chants, 'and *hot pound cake* for breakfast the day before! Such living . . .'. Seven gallons of water per week was the usual allowance for each person for all purposes; there was no possibility of a special supply of fresh water for washing clothes or bathing when five and six gallons daily had to be provided for each of the horses and cattle.¹ The use of water even for making tea was discouraged, perhaps deliberately, by allowing only half an ounce of tea daily for each person; water was further eked out by the daily issue of a quarter of a pint of rum. In the cuddy they drank a surprisingly large quantity of brandy, gin, porter, and wines:² surprising, that is, until it is remembered that alcohol was then thought to be a safeguard of health and an antiscorbutic, and that fresh water is the most precious commodity of any sailing ship at sea.

Among the *Caroline's* advertised attractions there had been no mention of a surgeon; but without one no passenger ship could get a clearance from the Custom House, and the Robert Morrah of neat habits and fluent oaths seems to have been the *Caroline's* medical man. Only too often ships' doctors were of doubtful quality and sometimes even a danger to their patients; Morrah, afterwards a connexion by marriage with the Hentys, was apparently not much liked; but after his return home in the *Caroline* his qualifications were good enough to make him acceptable as a practitioner in Worthing where his father, Dr. Michael Morrah, had been one of the town's first medical men. James was himself equipped to deal with certain emergencies, for he carried with him a set of exquisitely encased lancets, the gift of the family friend, Dr. Cloves.³ Fortunately, except in one instance, the health of the company was good throughout the voyage and all went successfully with the only confinement that took place. By the standards of those days the ship was not crowded, and her steerage passengers must have been induced to keep their berths, their bit of deck, and their persons as clean as salt water allowed, while the food was much better, more

¹ Gooch, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

² Captain Fewson's *Account of Consumption on the Caroline*: also James Henty's own list disputing Fewson's figures (both in *W.A. Arch.*).

³ Now in the possession of James Henty's grandson, Dr. Lewis Balfour of Melbourne.

varied, and more plentiful than most of them can ever have known. The *Caroline* was in consequence a healthy ship, unvisited by those dreaded and common plagues of emigrant vessels—scurvy, dysentery, and the typhus-carrying lice.

James's chief anxiety, as it turned out, was for the health of the stock rather than of the people. The *Caroline* had a small elevated deck aft, the poop deck, above the cabin accommodation and the cuddy; on this deck were the hen-coops, possibly the pigeons and rabbits. On the open deck below the poop there were the stacks of hay, the pigs, sheep, and some of the larger stock, including the two milch cows in the long-boat; the rest of the heavy animals were in the stables on the lower deck, where also were the living quarters of the steerage passengers. Somewhere amongst all this were the fruit-trees, currant bushes, and rose bushes for the colonial gardens-to-be.

Henty's animals were tended by the farm servants who had handled them for years. With familiar words, and in familiar garb, the men could bring some comfort to the beasts in their strange surroundings; but no Sussex lore of byre and stable and fold could teach them how to protect their charges from the power of the sea. That was a lesson that had to be learnt afloat. James began his first letter on 18 June when they had been nearly two weeks at sea; much of it is devoted to the troubles already met with in caring for the animals, especially for the valuable Egremont horses and mares:

James Henty to his father Thomas Henty.

Ship *Caroline* at Sea

Dear Father,

June 18, 1829.

We are now arrived at about the 30th degree of Latitude after a very beautiful passage the wind having continued fair nearly the whole distance. All the Stock excepting three killed for use I am happy to say are alive and considering all circumstances tolerably well. For two days when crossing the edge of the Bay of Biscay we had a very heavy swell which besides making us all very sick (Stephen excepted) rolled and tumbled the stock about dreadfully. Merino and Canopy were both down at a time and I expected to lose both of them for when once down they beat themselves about most severely. The line which fastens the breeching to the other part of the Sling in all cases gave way and the moment after down they go . . . one fall is bad enough but two or three I should think would be attended with certain death. . . . Merino was severely bruised and so completely

exhausted that we had the utmost difficulty in keeping her on her legs and even after the swell was somewhat abated; we contrived to make a stall for her fore and aft between the Corn bins and the fore hatch, where we have removed her and she appears better. Canopy from the blow she recd. in London has got a sore in her head of about an inch and a half in diameter and from the violence of her falls on board an abscess in her chest which we have opened; they are both in a progressive state of improvement. I have very great fears of these two mares. Petworth appears to bear it well and indeed all the others, particularly those in the large stalls. I am of opinion that both Cattle and Horses suffer less when placed fore and aft, but my experience is hardly sufficient to enable me to judge for certain as at present we have had nothing but rolling, no pitching. The Sheep suffered very much the first week, but are now recovering; we drench them every day, which is absolutely indispensable or some get no water at all and many will not drink without it.

We are going on very pleasantly on board; have a quiet rational party in the Cuddy, and considering the motley group are tolerably comfortable in the Steerage. Stephen, John and myself are quite well though John suffered severely from sea sickness. . . . I am writing this in hopes of meeting a vessel bound to England and unless we fall in with one soon I shall continue the letter at intervals. I have not yet got over the heavy roll of the ship; this is almost the first day of my being able to use a pen. We like our ship very much and Capt. Fewson keeps up the character which I had of him before leaving England. I purpose sending home a Bill of Lading to you when we arrive at Rio as one ought to be with you in case of accidents. From what I can judge of our present consumption of provisions I don't think it likely we shall want any further supply, they cannot eat the Beef at least only in very small quantities and I now wish we had brought a larger proportion of Pork, which is very much preferred by the people.

June 24th. Our Stock are alive and well, Merino and Canopy both better and the Sheep tolerable. . . . Mr. Everard paid me a few days ago £30 for the passage of one man which should have been paid at Littlehampton, with this supply therefore I hope not to want a great deal [of money] at Rio. Our consumption of Flour, Tea and Sugar is however very considerable and we must have a quantity of each as well as many other necessaries. I see the full force of being as economical as possible and as far as in me lay will I continue to be so. We have still a fair wind, running for days together 6 or 7 knots an hour. We are now in Latitude 18 preparing for hot weather which we expect to have shortly. The people are all well and appear comfort-

able; Mrs. Bushby who was sick for the first fortnight is now recovered and one of the gayest in the ship. We occasionally muster all hands on the Poop and go through the manual exercise and considering the short time we have been at it cut a very respectable figure. We have seen no sail for the last fortnight but hope to do so shortly, by the first of which I shall endeavour to send this letter. I shall be particularly anxious to know how you get on at Tarring and hope you will not fail to write by every ship.

July 2. All our stock are alive and well except the black greyhound which I expect was kicked off the forecastle by the boatswain. Merino and Canopy are both doing well; we have taken about 8 inches from each of the cows stalls adjoining which are quite large enough for the two small Alderneys and makes it much more comfortable for the horses; 3 Feet 10 Inches is the best size for a Horse Stall and as far as my experience goes I prefer slinging them to their lying down. The large cart mare broke her slings and fell with great violence a few days ago; with a little management I got her up without injury. . . .

A month after leaving Littlehampton, Camfield wrote that the passengers, horses, and sheep were in excellent health and 'all of us very happy'. The nights were beginning to fall with tropic suddenness when Henty's men gathered one evening on the moonlit deck and, led by the carpenter of the party, Charles Gee, gave three cheers to encourage themselves and then burst into song. The words were of Gee's own composition, in the rhythm of the traditional ballad with which Sussex shepherds celebrated the end of shearing, and were perhaps sung to the same familiar tune.¹ The song was a rustic Te Deum for deliverance from hardship at home, a rollicking invitation to others, still at the mercy of the parish officers, to make their escape too. It was loudly applauded: Camfield set it down for his sisters in all Gee's adventurous spelling and endorsed it 'true copy':

Song composed by Mr. Gee, and sung on Board the *Caroline* on her voyage to Swan River

Come all you English lads that have a mind to go
 Into some foring Contery I would have you for to know
 Come join along with Henty and all his joiful crew
 For a Set of better fellows in this world you never knew.

¹ N. P. Blaker, *Sussex in Bygone Days* (1906), pp. 12-13: 'Come all my jolly boys and we'll together go | Abroad with our Captain, to shear the lamb and Ewe', &c.

Coris

So is hear is of to New Holland if God will spear our lifes
All with littel families, hower sweethearts, and hower wives

Now England is got very bad, of that you well doth know
Provishons they are got very dear, and little for to do
So join along with Henty and all his joiful crew.

So is hear is of to etc.

Now all you I leves in England, I hope you may do well
But allow me for one moment your fourchoen for to tell
You must unto your Parish go to get small relife
Weare you will be flounced and bounced about as if you weare a thif.

So is here is of to etc.

Now when we come to New Holland I hope that soon will be
All will send home to England, and how happy there wee be
With plenty of provishons boys and plenty for to do
So hear is health to Henty and all his joiful crew.

So is hear is of to etc.

On Sundays, weather permitting, the people—according to Camfield ‘all decently clad and their behaviour very good’—gathered to hear Captain Fewson read Divine Service, sometimes illumined by one of the much-admired sermons of Dr. Blair on the Duties of Young Men or some other appropriate subject.¹ No doubt on the Sabbath day the thoughts of many strayed nostalgically from the elegancies of Blair to Sunday scenes at home; but on Monday spirits would be up again, minds would be filled with the small distractions of their present life—the escort of porpoises, the spouting of the grampus, the glitter of flying fish, the myriad blue sails of the nautilus so curiously named Portuguese man o’ war. Sometimes the ocean would be shared for an hour or two by a distant brig; once the *Caroline* was passed by an English sloop-of-war, *Rainbow*, Captain

¹ Dr. Hugh Blair (1718–1800), professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres, Edinburgh, and fashionable preacher. His published sermons were popular fifty years before Captain Fewson resorted to their help in the *Caroline*: ‘I love Blair’s Sermons’, said Dr. Johnson in 1781; ‘Though the dog is a Scotchman, and a Presbyterian, and everything he should not be, I was the first to praise them.’ A century after Johnson the sermons were dismissed as ‘feeble in thought though with a certain elegance of manner’ (*D.N.B.*).

Rous, lately in Australian waters and now on the way to Rio like the *Caroline* herself. James wrote that

The sight of a sail is now quite an event. Fishing for Albercore, Flying-Fish and Sharks has been our great amusement during the last weeks, though without any success. Shooting at a bottle from the yard arm has also been one of our amusements and some of us have proved ourselves good shots and fancy we are equal to any pirate.

Only a few hours after that last word was written, it was in everybody's mouth. Camfield described the occasion to his family with zest. At half-past five in the morning a strange sail showed in the early light. At seven all male hands were called up to prepare for an attack by pirates, and the women were sent below. Such affairs were not unusual; no doubt every soul on board, including the children, knew of the alarming experience with pirates that the *Caroline* had suffered off the west coast of Africa on her previous voyage. Muskets, pistols, and cutlasses were laid ready on the poop and the carriage guns were loaded with grape shot; Henty's and Camfield's practise at bottles and boobies seemed likely to prove of real use. In half an hour, says James's version, all was ready: the vessel came nearer and nearer—and then peaceably lowered a boat. She turned out to be *l'Actif*, a French barque on her way home from India to Bordeaux with a cargo of indigo, salt-petre, and cochineal; her determined approach to the *Caroline* was due merely to a shortage of bread. The weapons were cleared away and a hundred pounds of biscuit presented to *l'Actif*'s boat's crew. 'Quite exciting', commented Camfield, and finished and directed his letter, to be handed over with the bread; but finding that the French postage would be enormous he decided that news of him and his adventures must just wait for the next English packet from Rio. James was not deterred by the cost to his family from this first chance to communicate with home. Before giving his letter to the Frenchman he rounds it properly off:

Our Stock is all well and all our people. Stephen and John are quite well and desire their kind love to yourself, Mother, Jane and all the boys in which I most cordially join—Believe me to remain Dear Father your most affectionate Son.

JAMES HENTY.

A postscript gives the latitude and longitude and asks his father

to let Bishop, the ship's agent, know as soon as the letter is received, for the information of Lloyd's. He ends, 'God bless you all'.

One lapse in behaviour is recorded, by Camfield. Three days before crossing the line the boatswain and some of the crew got drunk. One of them, he says, had the honour of receiving the rope's end at the hands of the captain and when the line was crossed no ceremony was allowed: 'His Marine Majesty did not condescend to visit us, being affronted at our Boatswain and his crew in making too free libations to the God Bacchus some few days since.' One suspects an understandable conspiracy between King Neptune, Captain Fewson, and Mr. Henty to avoid the horseplay of the traditional sport.

The cabin passengers continued to find entertainment in small things: they found it amusing, said Camfield, to pick ripe gooseberries and currants in the tropics, and to gather one precious China rose, from bushes lately rooted in English soil; fun to scramble into a lowered boat—a valuable possession of the popular Mackie's—for a stretch at the oars and to find it filling so fast that there was barely time to scramble back on board the *Caroline*; mildly stirring to watch the rescue of the captain's dog, discovered paddling half a mile astern: but in the steerage, less comfortable and for many without the solace of books, grumbling had begun and increased as the days went by. James showed understanding:

They have of course a considerable deal of time on their hands. I believe it is universally acknowledged that when idle Englishmen get together nothing can prevent it [grumbling]. I keep them now well at work and the more the mind is amused the better they are. My men of themselves are very well but there are many others in the ship belonging to the Passengers over whom I have no control and they help to contaminate my men. You will find, unless the greatest good management prevails, that sailing a long voyage with a number of labourers is anything but a bed of roses. Employment is by far the best thing for them and if possible let there be an equal distribution of labour or it leads to endless squabbles.

The ship dawdled on. Now, the events of life at sea mattered less than the expectation of reaching land. It was of momentary interest to see a passing schooner hoist Brazilian colours, but by now each slow hour was filled with longing to see Brazil itself.

At last, on a Thursday afternoon, Camfield, aloft in the main-top-mast cross-trees with his telescope and Alfred Stone, spied the tops of mountains far off. Arrived on the coast, the *Caroline* spent all Friday sailing up and down hunting for the entrance to the harbour. It was not until sunset on Sunday, 26 July, that she crept between the forts on either side of the narrow opening and anchored beneath the ramparts of Rio's fantastic peaks.

THE *CAROLINE* AT RIO

NEWSPAPER readers among the *Caroline*'s passengers must long have known of Rio as one of the busy harbours of the world, and of Brazil as an independent empire, revolted from its parent, Portugal, and at present a bitter disputant in the matter of the Portuguese throne. Outside interest in this Braganza family quarrel was not confined to diplomats; ordinary people everywhere were discussing it and taking sides. The English press was full of it, because England was still politically interested in the affairs of Portugal, as she had been in the days of Napoleon and the Peninsular War, and Portugal was still deeply involved with her late colonial possession, Brazil. Miguel of Portugal, younger brother of Brazil's first emperor, Pedro, was attempting at this very time to oust Pedro's ten-year-old daughter, Maria, from the Portuguese throne. In recent years the British Government had been closely concerned in the dynastic problems of Portugal, and British naval officers in the revolutionary movements of Brazil; and though now the Duke of Wellington, as Prime Minister, was determined that Britain must be neutral in the present quarrel, the English Court was openly against Miguel, and plain Englishmen, such as the cabin passengers of the *Caroline*, were romantically on the side of the child queen.¹ Maria was at this moment in England seeking the protection of George IV, and according to the Court journal exciting in his royal breast those chivalrous feelings of benevolence, which youth, beauty, and helplessness, united in such exalted rank, will never fail to produce in a noble mind.²

Just before the *Caroline* sailed for Rio the fair-haired Donna Maria da Gloria, accompanied by the equally young Princess Victoria of England, had attended a children's ball given in

¹ Sir James Mackintosh, 'Statement of the Case of Donna Maria da Gloria, etc.', *Miscellaneous Works* (1846), vol. ii, pp. 427-8; John Armitage, *History of Brazil from 1801-1834* (1836).

² *The Times*, reprinted in the *Sydney Gazette*, 1.9.29, under the heading 'English News by the Norfolk up to May 19th'.

Maria's honour by George IV. Maria, a grown-up guest recorded, was finely dressed and wore a riband over her shoulder and sat by the King. 'Our little Princess', said this onlooker, Charles Greville, 'is a short vulgar-looking child, and not near so good looking as the Portuguese.' But, he mused, though Victoria's face might not be so pretty as Maria's 'sensible Austrian countenance', if Nature had not done so much for her, Fortune was likely to do a great deal more. Meantime, these two children, heiresses to such diverse empires, both destined to marry princelings of Saxe-Coburg, romped at a party at St. James's Palace and Maria 'in dancing, fell down and hurt her face, and was frightened and bruised, and went away'.¹ Frights and bruises in plenty lay ahead of Maria before she was to be universally accepted as Portugal's rightful queen.

Maria da Gloria was shortly to leave England and to travel to Rio under the wing of a second bride for her father, the Emperor Pedro. Already when the *Caroline* arrived there were preparations for the royal wedding: there were to be 'great doings', wrote Camfield, and reported, as a preliminary, the banishment of the mistress who had ruined the life of the first empress and brought grave scandal on the new empire of Brazil.²

Camfield had perhaps travelled a little in the Old World; James Henty had had one journey to France, if nothing more; some of their fellow passengers in the cabin may have been abroad oftener than they: but it is unlikely that among the others of the *Caroline's* people there were any that had been outside their own county, much less beyond England itself. Throughout the passage they had sighted no land, so that it was on eyes accustomed until now only to southern England's gentle landscape that the Brazilian scene burst like a full orchestra on ears attuned only to a shepherd's flute. The *Caroline's* company, looking across the water, saw churches and convents and shuttered houses of unfamiliar outline and lifted their eyes, not to small encircling hill or distant downland, but to mountains of startling shapes rising sheer from the edges of the town. At home a foreigner was a man who, though looking much like themselves, came from the other side of the county's border:

¹ *Greville Memoirs*, vol. i, p. 293.

² Mary Wilhelmina Williams, *Dom Pedro the Magnanimous* (1937), pp. 13-14.

here, when they landed on the mole, they found picturesquely dressed men and women derived from Catholic Europe and some who were part Indian, part Portuguese; and here, for the first time in their lives, they saw unclothed people with black skins. If these English peasants had ever consciously thought of themselves not merely as deeply unfortunate but as actual slaves, they could never after this think so again, for here was brutal physical slavery undisguised. Here, in the shadow of the cathedral, negroes, some chained in pairs, were kept to their tasks by soldiers with cane and bayonet; others, monkey-like boys and girls in their early teens, sat in the slave market waiting their turn to pass for a few pounds from one rich owner to another. The beasts of burden were negroes and mules—horses were rare and used only for pleasure; there were no coaches and the few cabriolets and clumsy wheeled carts were drawn by mules; ladies and old gentlemen were conveyed in palanquins on the shoulders of liveried negroes; near naked negroes, raucously chanting, trotted the streets with bundles of water pails on their heads. To the amateur artist in James there was certainly enchantment in the distant view: in a small sketch-book with brass clasps and covers of chestnut-coloured leather, satin smooth, he recorded his enjoyment of Rio's extravagant silhouette in six pencil drawings of the approaches to the harbour and three, from across the water, of the town itself. But the grandeur of the mountains was belied by the squalid town stifling below them along the sea's edge; the heat, and the shock of the slavery, were too much for both Camfield and James. The harbour and surrounding country James found 'beautifully grand and in the hands of almost any nation but the Portuguese would be made a place of great importance'; but the people were 'indolent and dirty to a degree' and the town 'disgustingly filthy and stinking hot beyond bearing and crowded with black slaves'.

The slave trade is carried on in all its vigour; a vessel yesterday passed between us and the *Warspite* close alongside full of slaves. They now fetch a very high price, a clever boy is worth from £50 to £60; the Brazilian Government are allowed to continue the trade for about three months more and the importations have for months past averaged 5000 a month.

Camfield exclaimed

Such houses, streets, people, soldiers I never saw before, what with the slaves, dirt, and filth of the streets, we are all more than satisfied with the first appearance; 'tis a thoroughly disagreeable place.

He gets his hair cut by a 'blacky'—an unhygienic adventure that makes him uneasy for the rest of the week; buys pineapples and citrons and other exotic fruits, dines at the English hotel or at the houses of English merchants to whom he had brought letters of recommendation, and attends the opera. A search for mules took James into the surrounding country, but it seems that Camfield did not venture beyond the town, saw no orange groves with their attendant humming birds—'kiss-flowers', the Brazilians called them—and none of the glories of the tropical forest close at hand.

Henty's men and the other steerage passengers, with no money to spend, probably passed their time staring and idling and, like their betters, comparing the unfamiliar with the long known. One man and his wife, emigrating from Tunbridge Wells as servants to Everard, the naval officer on half-pay, had no heart for sight-seeing, for here their child died and was buried where they were never likely to see its grave again.¹ This was the only death during the whole voyage and there was to be only one birth; the wife of Camfield's labourer, Frederick Friend, was expecting soon to be confined. When Camfield wrote from Rio of having 'gained the favour of all the women in the ship (*including the doctor*)' by offering to give up his cabin to Mrs. Friend when the time came, his italics seem to hint that, clever though Robert Morrah might be with physic and lancet, on board he was not thought much of as a man.

The *Caroline* was a week in Rio Harbour, anchored among nearly a hundred sail of merchant vessels and a number of men-of-war. The frigate, *Menai*, 28 guns, lay alongside; near by was *Cadmus*, 12; *Rainbow*, the sloop that had passed the *Caroline* at sea, with her cock-fighting, horse-racing Captain Rous, fresh from sport in Malacca and Sydney before that.² *Warspite*, 74,

¹ William Bachford and his wife, Lucy, from Barnes.

² 'If cocking which formerly was a grand sport with the great nobles of this Kingdom be now a sin, I am an old and hardened sinner. In 1827, in command of *Rainbow*, I brought ten English-bred cocks from Sydney to Malacca, and fought ten battles with a Chinese merchant, who had defeated all the Malays. We won every battle' (T. Bird, *Admiral Rous and the English Turf* (1939), p. 298). In Queensland,

recently from Sydney, was now flagship of the South American Squadron under Admiral Baker.¹ Not far off were the warships of Brazil, Portugal, America, and France, their wardrooms no doubt buzzing in three languages with gossip about the Emperor's behaviour and the moves in the matter of Maria da Gloria and her uncle Don Miguel. At night, music from the bands of the English warships beguiled such of the *Caroline's* passengers who thought it wiser not to be in Rio's streets after dark. Not long afterwards, *Warspite* was to provide the Emperor with a refuge after his abdication from the throne; from her decks, before leaving his turbulent country for good, Pedro spent his last Brazilian days peacefully catching fish.² At the moment, however, *Warspite* had the humbler role of being useful to an English emigrant ship: for Captain Fewson was again in trouble with some of his crew. A day or so after their arrival at Rio the boatswain struck the first mate; the mate produced pistols and, according to Camfield, if there had been further violence the boatswain would have been shot dead. With another seaman he was sent on board *Warspite*; a third man jumped overboard and swam to the frigate *Menai*, whence he was sent back to the *Caroline*; but Captain Fewson would have none of him, and a few days later all three trouble makers were shipped off to England in *Menai*. James told his Father that

Captain Fewson is not a very mild tempered man and he has had several severe quarrels with his crew three of whom have gone on board the *Menai*. In some respects it has a good effect as it shews my men the difference between a sailor's life and theirs, certainly much against the former.

Whether Captain Fewson signed on new hands from among the derelict sailors of Rio's sea front, we are not told; as a good seaman, he is unlikely to have faced the stormy half of the voyage without a full crew.

James's first Rio letter was carried by the *Menai*; it reported a fine passage and the horses all alive and well; in fact, James

Rainbow Reach and Rous Channel, as well as Stradbroke Island and Dunwich Point, commemorate Rous and his family names and his ship, the first war vessel to enter Moreton Bay, site of the future city of Brisbane. The names were given by command of Governor Darling (*Sydney Gazette*, 18.7.27).

¹ Rear-Admiral of the Red, Sir Thomas Baker, held chief command in South America, 1829-33 (*O'Byrne*).

² *Dom Pedro the Magnanimous*, p. 19.

was after all in great hopes of getting Merino and Canopy to the Swan, despite the severe weather that had to be expected 'towards the South'. The horses were kept in slings and were never left alone, four men taking it in turn to attend them night and day. The sheep, on the whole, were doing exceedingly well, though some of them were very thin; one ewe had died, James believed from sheer old age. They had had the misfortune to lose one of the Devon cows; a post mortem revealed the cause as inflammation of the lungs, which they had no means of accounting for. He meant to buy two mules, if he could find good ones, and had also to buy stocks of sugar, tea, coffee, maize, flour, and sundry smaller articles they were in want of. He had some gossip to give his father about the *Calista*, a ship well ahead of the *Caroline* in the race for the Swan, for she had sailed from England with a party of settlers only a few weeks after Stirling and the two official ships and had been gone from Rio some two months.

I find that the *Calista* was in a dreadful state of confusion during the time she was here, all the Cuddy and Steerage passengers complaining of an inadequate supply of provisions. They represented the case to Lord Ponsonby, our ambassador here, who I believe adjusted the matter . . . a regular treaty was drawn up . . . for the daily supply both for Cuddy and Steerage.

On *Calista*'s passage, 9 out of 13 horses had died and 100 out of 200 sheep; at least, so he had been told, but local tales were not to be relied on, the inhabitants being so regrettably like the Portuguese. The narrators of the tales had, in fact, been more faithful to the truth than James could have credited in members of the Latin race; a *Calista* passenger, Mr. George Leake, confirms them all; he also speaks of there being fifty of Mr. Henty's merino rams in the *Calista*, presumably bound for a buyer in Van Diemen's Land. Leake contrasts the well-judged selection and preparation of the Henty sheep with the carelessness of the arrangements made by Colonel Lautour, owner of the other stock aboard, whose mismanagement he blames for the loss of all the stallions and the daily deaths among his sheep.¹ James, rather curiously, makes no mention of the *Calista* merinos.

The night before the *Menai* sailed, some of *Warspite*'s officers

¹ 'George Leake at Sea', *W.A. Hist. Soc. Jour.*, pt. x.

came on board the *Caroline* with the admiral's offer of free postage in his bag. In his note, written in haste at 10 p.m., James enclosed *Caroline's* bill of lading and found time to tell of the arrival of the *Lady Rowena* from Van Diemen's Land with a bad account of scab and rot among the sheep in the island, and with four runaway convicts on board; these, he said, had been at once transferred to the *Warspite* for reshipping to the prison colony by the first chance. He referred again to the disordered state of the *Calista*; the *Caroline*, he hoped, would be ready to sail in a few days. He had a new motive for hurry: the Emperor Pedro, a noted horseman, had gone on board the *Calista* and had offered £300 for one of Colonel Lautour's four surviving horses; his offer was refused and now Pedro was said to be coveting some of *Caroline's* pedigree stock:

I hear he is coming to us, but I hope not and shall endeavour to prevent it if possible, as if once he gets his mind on an animal he is an awkward hand to get rid of.

James had one more chance to write from Rio. An Arundel brig, the *Williams*, was to sail in a few days and Captain Bartholomew, he said, had good-naturedly offered to take letters free of charge. So Stephen and John and many of the men were preparing long letters; James himself took full advantage of the offer by covering several sheets with advice and information written with a finer pen than usual and in a smaller hand. Marketing for the ship, he said, had exposed him to the sun at all times; winter though it was, a bare head at midday risked a *coup de soleil*, but he had borne the heat very well. He had got his mules, not first-rate animals and dear at £11—100 milius—apiece. Everything was dear except oranges, and they were so cheap that several of his men had eaten too many and made themselves ill: the proper remedies had been immediately applied and they were all better, but James was anxious to get them away from the tempting abundance. The varying price charged to the *Caroline* passengers for oranges moved Camfield to call the people of Rio egregious cheats—whereas Alfred Stone, lawyer though he was, had paid 1½*d.* for two, and Camfield 1*s.* for sixty, the shrewd James, buying 2,000 for the ship, paid no more than 1*s.* 8*d.* As well as oranges, James laid in quantities of limes, pumpkins, and yams, stores of flour



Shipped in good Order and well conditioned by James Henry Esq.
in and upon the good Ship called the Caroline and bound for
whereof is Master for this present Voyage Thomas Fewson
and now riding at Anchor in the River Sharnes
Swan Mason, New Shore to Wales

and of Indolment.

being marked and numbered as in the Margin and are to be delivered in the like good Order
and well conditioned at the above said Port of Success, Biscaya or at St Charles Bay
the City of God this being so many Years and every other Language and Words as follows. Castles and Churches of Indians in nature
which were captured are taken up for us. Ships are built there, unto James Heidy Esq.

14th Dec. 1892.

with Prunage and: beverage surrounded. In Gardens whereof the. Master over Power of the said
Ship both appeared to. These Bells of Sinking all of this Time and Date the one of which
Three. Bells being overwhelmed the other seems to stand void.

Label in London, 1 June 1829

counted each hour to

George Burhop,

1890

<div> <div> <div>18 1/4</div> <div>18 1/5 2</div> <div>1/3, 1/3, 67/68</div> <div>41</div> </div> <div>3/8, 1.</div> <div> <div>1/18, 50/55, 19</div> <div>22, 210/215</div> <div>188/209, 216</div> <div>123, 72, 89/92</div> <div>1/26, 1/5, 101</div> <div>102, 107, 11</div> </div> <div> <div>56/66, 44/50</div> <div>64/70, 75, 77</div> <div>179, 80/88, 93</div> <div>94, 95, 45/48</div> <div>105/106, 47, 49</div> <div>120, 121</div> </div> <div> <div>40/45, 118-0/</div> <div>157, 6/7-</div> </div> <div> <div>47, 76, 48, 122</div> <div>96/97</div> <div>1/4</div> </div> <div> <div>98/99, 116/</div> <div>119, 44</div> </div> <div>2.</div> <div> <div>1/40, 2/3, 1/2</div> <div>100, 1/3-</div> <div>103/104</div> <div>4/5</div> <div>3</div> <div>9/23</div> </div> </div>	<div>19 Fclds</div> <div>6 Bunches</div> <div>106 baskets</div> <div>41 Bundles</div> <div>16 Bunches</div> <div>8 Cases</div> <div>2 Bunches</div> <div>4 Cases</div> <div>7 Baskets</div> <div>1 Package</div> <div>44 Kegs</div> <div>4 Chests</div> <div>2 Boxes</div> <div>2 Cases</div> <div>1 Bag</div> <div>15 Tierces</div> <div>39 Bundles</div> <div>5 Wheel</div> <div>3 Anchors</div> <div>205 Bars</div> <div>38 Bolts</div> <div>1 Pig Lead</div> <div>1 Grapnel</div> <div>4 Aale Arms</div> <div>10 1/2 Cowl</div> <div>1 Well Spindle</div> <div>2 Coppers</div> <div>1 Pump</div> <div>3 Gun dolsone</div> <div>1 Bale</div> <div>1 Cask</div> <div>1 Chest</div> <div>3 Crowbars</div> <div>4 Buckets</div> <div>2 Hoes</div> <div>3 Hammers</div> <div>8 Boxes</div> <div>12 Jars</div> <div>5 Casks</div> <div>20 Kegs</div> <div>6 Casks</div> <div>8 Cask</div> <div>11 Bolts</div> <div>680</div>	<div> <div>18</div> <div>680</div> </div> <div>5 basts</div> <div>1 Bundle</div> <div>9 Cases</div> <div>2 Bunches</div> <div>4 Bales</div> <div>5 Packages</div> <div>1 Keg</div> <div>1 Bale</div> <div>3 Cases</div> <div>15 Case</div> <div>2 Basket</div> <div>6 Hams</div> <div>J. Henry</div> <div>1/5</div> <div>36</div> <div> <div>18</div> <div>1</div> </div> <div>1/3</div> <div> <div>18</div> <div>1</div> </div> <div>15 Case</div> <div>2 Basket</div> <div>6 Hams</div> <div>5 Bundles</div> <div>1 Case</div> <div>1 Case</div> <div>8,000 brass Nails</div> <div> <div>5,740</div> </div>
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and corn, tea and coffee, Dutch cheeses and Madeira wine, finding that flour, corn, and tea cost more than in England and that, naturally, sugar, coffee, and tobacco cost less. From all accounts, he understood that everything but tobacco was dearer at Rio than at the Cape; indeed, if only the Cape were approachable in the winter season it would be in all ways preferable as a port of call.

James had proved the importance of providing good meals for the 'motley group' in the steerage. Perhaps with the *Calista's* troubles in mind, he impressed upon his father that it was 'a most material thing to attend to the allowances for the people' and gave him the following scale as a basis for his calculations when it came to chartering a ship himself:

Bread	.	.	.	As much as they like	
Beef	.	.	.	1 lb.	} each other day
Pork	.	.	.	$\frac{3}{4}$ lb.	
Tea	.	.	.	$\frac{1}{4}$ oz.	
Sugar	.	.	.	2 oz.	} each day
Rum	.	.	.	1 gill	
Flour	.	.	.	$\frac{1}{4}$ lb.	
Peas	.	.	.	$\frac{1}{4}$ pint	} each other day
Butter	.	.	.	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb.	
Suet	.	.	.	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb.	} per week
Raisins	.	.	.	$\frac{1}{4}$ lb.	
Oatmeal when sickness occurs					
Rice at their option, as a change from flour.					

The men needed tobacco; the equivalent indulgence for the women seems to have been an occasional supply of soap. As to appetites in the cuddy:

A pint of Wine and a pint of Porter each person is usually drank per day and sometimes more Wine, but no limitation has been made. The consumption of Cheese and Butter in the Cuddy is considerable as well as flour and a quantity of each must be laid in. A ton and a half of potatoes are absolutely necessary as also a keg of refined treacle. Hams, Tongues, preserved fresh meats and soups are essential, the latter in particular. A filter (stone) for your own use would be an excellent thing as the water is sometimes very bad. Lime Juice is a good thing and a good lamp to hang in the cabin. These things, though apparently trifling, you will find of very great importance

when you come out, and at sea these little trifles are not easily to be remedied.

For some reason, perhaps because the ship had provided too few casks, there had been less water for the stock than they actually needed; they had done well enough on bare rations but would have drunk more; here was another useful warning to his father.

Take care to have the power of giving your stock so much water per day, say at least five gallons for horses and cows, 2 quts. for sheep, 1 gall. for pigs and a quantity for poultry. We have had more trouble about water than any one thing as the difficulty of getting it out of the hold every day is very great. The ship ought to provide a given number of hands to assist the country men on board our ship. I make all the male steerage passengers take turns to get it out, forming three gangs of 8 or 9 each, and it is now managed very well. The ship ought also to fill up the water at her own expense, at any port she touched at.

James was concerned at having been obliged to use on board a great quantity of the deals intended for house building at the Swan; however, all the fittings between decks would come down at the end of the voyage and would be used in some way.

Unless Capt. Stirling has some place ready to receive our goods and cattle I fear we shall be put to very great inconvenience and under any circumstances I fear we shall experience some loss from the quantity of damageable property we have on board.

In this, his last letter from Brazil, James's thoughts turned homewards and he wondered what was happening to the family affairs now that he himself could take no part. Was the farm yet sold? If so, were there already definite plans for leaving England in the next year?

I am particularly anxious to hear from you and on no account omit to write by almost every vessel. You have probably done something decisive respecting the farm by this time and I shall be glad to be made acquainted with particulars, much will possibly depend on the sale as to your future arrangements but under any circumstances I shall not expect you out before Sept^r or Oct^r 1830.

Calculating dates, he must have envisaged the possibility that his parents would sail from England before they could receive his first letter from the Swan: this, then, might be goodbye until they met in New Holland.

A week at Rio was enough for the provisioning and watering of the ship and more than enough for the passengers, all anxious to be off. Advances by the Emperor had, it seems, been successfully eluded, for when the *Caroline* sailed on Sunday, 2 August, she carried away the Egremont stock intact.

BRAZIL TO THE SWAN

So far, all the way from England, the weather had been invariably fine; the ocean was either blue and lively, or blue and calm. Its familiar face changed soon after the *Caroline* left Rio and started on the long curve away down south of the Cape and northwards again to Swan River. The last fine day was the 12th of August; it was the King's birthday, and Camfield says that they did not neglect to drink his health. That night they met their first gale; the sea came over the poop and deck in tons, setting the coops and hay adrift, knocking passengers about, and killing two pigs. Everyone got into winter clothes and talked about the cold. James, who had just suffered his first severe loss in the death of a black cart colt from lung disease, was much occupied in ministering to his unhappy animals, altering their stalls, adding this and that to their food, countering as far as possible the damage they did themselves when, despite their slings, they were thrown to the deck. When the weather improved, the human beings recovered quicker than the cattle; once more dry and comfortable, Camfield says they forgot their 'wet clothes, wet cabins, thumps, bumps and bruises', compared the ship, forging ahead in a fair wind, to an easily riding carriage and declared the taut sails lovelier than a team of greys. 'We measure our time like school boys and have now less than 100 degrees of Longitude to run to where the Swan should be!'

But the respite was short. A few of the steerage passengers showed their resentment at the return of bad weather by behaving riotously at the height of the gale and in consequence had their grog stopped. A letter from James tells of

a most terrific storm from the east, accompanied with an almost overwhelming sea breaking frequently alongside as high as her main top: it lasted thirty six hours, and the consequences have been deplorable.

While shepherds and stockmen did what they could for the beasts in their care, other men were called upon to take their turn at the pumps to relieve the exhausted crew. Lamps were

extinguished and for some days those not working were battened down below in the dark. James told his father the sorrowful tale of their losses:

The small milch cow in the boat died first, and the other is so seriously bruised that I fear she will never rise again. One of the Devons below had both her hind legs broken, which obliged us to kill her. The large cart mare is dead, actually beaten to death. Foot and Jewell are very much bruised, and also Wanderer, and several other of the horses and mules are seriously injured, notwithstanding all our persevering attention. The rushing of the wind, screaming of the women, suffering of the animals, and torrents of water poured in occasionally on deck, made altogether a scene which beggars description. Thank God our lives are all safe, and, considering all things, we have less loss than could have been expected; had one of the heavy seas come on board everything on her deck must have gone. I kept Stephen and John off the deck as much as possible, and to this day I believe they do not know the extent of our danger.

James does not soften the recital for the benefit of his parents, soon to set sail themselves: he evidently knows that they would prefer the truth. He goes on to praise Captain Fewson as a seaman and a navigator and calls the *Caroline* a remarkably tight ship. 'Be very particular', he urges his father, 'in the selection of a strong ship.'

They had now to bear intense cold, heavy rain and sleet, as well as the terrible rolling and labouring of the *Caroline*. In the storm, wrote James,

our sheep died from exhaustion and wet; ten that were nearly gone I sent below, and drenched with a small quantity of rum and water (a very good thing in these cases); they are all better, and with care may come round; we have lost four pigs and two dozen poultry which will make us short of fresh provisions before we reach our destination, which cannot be before the middle of October. Fortunately we have a tolerable supply of Cooper's preserved soups.

On the first rough night, Camfield moved his cot into the cuddy, giving over his cabin to Mrs. Friend. Next day, 17 September at half past noon, amid all the clamour of the storm, her baby—'a great boy'—was born. Writing the news to his sisters the same day, Camfield was happy to say that Mrs. Friend was 'doing charmingly'.

How did the cabin passengers pass their time while the *Caroline* steadily made her easting despite the assaults of the angry seas? In the South Atlantic, half-way between South America and the longitude of the Cape, they passed to the northward of Tristan d'Acunha, and out came James's book and pencil to sketch its pointed top, wreathed in heavy cloud; in the Southern Indian Ocean, half-way between the Cape and Western Australia, they sighted the Islands of New Amsterdam and St. Paul's: except for these bleak reminders that the world was not all water, they saw no land for more than two months. While the ship scudded with bare poles before a following sea, her travellers watched the waves for hours from the bows above the dizzily plunging figurehead; after dark, they played whist for love in the cuddy, with worn packs, and broken biscuits for markers. At meals Mackie, the lawyer from India, well read and witty, kept them all laughing; whatever the subject under discussion, he always had something to say that was to the point and amusing too—nevertheless, says Camfield, he was stingy, 'a terrible *screw*'. In contrast to the popular if miserly Mackie there was Hawkins, the inevitable passenger whom nobody likes and everybody disregards. Stone, the solicitor with the black mustachoes and a tendency to tell long stories, was now very quiet; Everard, curiously clumsy on his feet for a sailor, told his anecdotes too often and too often repeated his stock of sea songs. The yellow-haired Talbot, who smoked segars and turned in at six, buried himself in the classic volumes of Burn's *Justice of the Peace and Parish Officer* when he was not patching his trousers or mending somebody's broken lock. The nostalgic mate, Heyers, talked of his wife; the captain, always civil, shook hands in the morning and 'wined' at night, but vexed Camfield by his social pretensions and his certainty that he was always right. As the voyage drew to its end, tension grew and the captain's civility waned; he made a crony of Dr. Morrah but quarrelled with the rest, ate his meals in his cabin, and relieved his feelings by refusing to disclose to the passengers the longitude of the ship. They did not care, for Captain Fewson could not disguise the various signs that proved they were not far from the Australian coast. For some days there had been 'much scraping, cleaning, and painting of boats, and other symptoms of disembarkation'. 'We are full of spirits today', said Camfield in the last letter he

wrote from the *Caroline*, 'they have hoist the cable'. On the morning of Monday, 12 October, they sighted land.

What awaited them, behind that dim pencil line on the horizon, that first faint signal from the Promised Land? Was the settlement already begun—earth turned over, seed sown, shelters built? They knew, could know, nothing; not even whether Stirling's advance party, only four months ahead of them, had indeed arrived. In these last restless hours, as the *Caroline* with crowded sail drew nearer and nearer to the coast, those on board could steady themselves by remembering the happy statements about Swan River made by Stirling himself: that the soil was good and the land open and well-watered by numerous springs, so that a settler could bring his farm into immediate culture. What more could land-hungry men ask than a free grant of such land and the chance to work it? In all good faith, they had staked their fortunes on these assurances and chosen Swan River for their new home.

As later that day they passed the low scrubby hummocks of Rottnest Island, James traced their outline in his sketch book, adding tiny portraits of the *Caroline* herself and of two ships met with that morning and now in *Caroline's* company making for the anchorage in Gage's Roads. Darkness fell before he could add a first view of the mainland, and it was not until nine o'clock that night that, to their great joy, they dropped anchor off the mouth of the Swan.

Part III
IN THAT VAST COUNTRY
1826—1829



I

JOHN BULL AND NEW HOLLAND

THE Swan River Settlement owed its existence mainly to Captain Stirling's belief that here was a paradise for the taking and that Great Britain was about to be forestalled there by her hereditary enemies, the French. Stirling was by no means alone in suspecting the motive of the French movements in the southern seas—secret intelligence from Paris, that France intended to plant a penal colony in the west, first alarmed Downing Street and was sent by the Colonial Office to Governor Darling in Sydney;¹ but without Stirling's enthusiasm and persistence an administration bent on economy would probably have abstained thankfully from doing anything about it. Stirling it was that, by his sincerity and persuasive powers, induced the British Government to act on the suspicion and to agree to plant a flag and a few score settlers on that western coast of the continent to which so far nobody had laid claim.

Before Trafalgar, fear of French settlement had led the British to establish three convict outposts at 'Botany Bay'—one at Port Phillip and two in Van Diemen's Land, southerly pin-

¹ Secret intelligence from Paris in 1825, memo now in Bathurst MSS., quoted by Eris O'Brien, *The Foundation of Australia*, p. 3.

'France intends to form a colony to which criminals who have hitherto been condemned to the galleys, may be sent. Several places have been under consideration at which to establish it, but the general opinion has been favourable to New Holland, both as regards the climate and the little opposition that is to be apprehended from the natives. —'s opinion is asked as to the probability of England making any objections. Only a very small part of the country is occupied by England; and there is space enough for every state to send colonies without their interfering with each other.'

points on the huge empty map of a land that except for the parent pinpoint of Sydney, on Port Jackson, and its neighbourhood on the east coast, had up till then been unoccupied by white men. Long after Trafalgar the fear was still there. In 1818, as in 1803, French voyages for scientific discovery had created uneasiness in London and New South Wales. Again, in 1826, Lord Bathurst at the Colonial Office and General Ralph Darling in Sydney exchanged expressions of concern as to the true aim of the French discovery ships dispatched to the southern coasts of New Holland. It was not a question of illegal invasion of British property, since Britain had never claimed the whole of the continent and her territory did not then extend farther west than the 129th meridian that divided Australia roughly in two halves; the western half thus, theoretically at least, lay exposed to the chances of foreign settlement by any nation caring to risk an argument with England.¹

Quickly, occupation beyond the declared limit must now be made: small human ramparts were to be set up by Governor Darling in two places many hundreds of miles apart to prevent action by interlopers. The spots chosen for these new penal stations were Westernport, in the south, within British territory but untenanted, and King George's Sound in the unclaimed far west. Early in November 1826, escorted by H.M. Sloop *Fly*, two colonial brigs sailed from Sydney, each with two officers and about twenty rank and file and twenty convicts, and provisions for six months. The officers carried with them instructions from Governor Darling, conveying Colonial Office orders that if the French were found to be already landed it was not to be admitted to them that British rights did not in fact cover the whole continent: in the case of Westernport, within the 129th meridian, the presence of the French was to be treated as an 'unjustifiable intrusion on His Britannic Majesty's possessions'; at King George's Sound, the officers were to 'regulate their language' to avoid suggesting the existence of a doubt as to the title to the western coast as distinct from New South Wales, the division (the French were to be told) being merely 'ideal' and the name New South Wales being merely a convenient label for 'the more settled part of the country'. If the French desired a more satisfactory explanation, they were

¹ Darling to Bathurst, 24.11.26 (*I H.R.A.*, vol. xii, p. 700).

to be referred to Governor Darling, over 2,000 miles to the east.¹

The departure of H.M.S. *Fly* with the two brigs did not leave Sydney without naval protection, for it chanced that while the expedition was fitting out, two warships arrived from Trincomalee *en route* to the South American station. These were *Volage*, Captain R. S. Dundas, and *Warspite*, 74, the first line-of-battle ship to visit Sydney, with the Commander-in-Chief, East India, Commodore Sir James Brisbane, and his wife and family on board.² It was Brisbane who, ten years earlier, had carried home Exmouth's dispatches with news of the victory of Algiers; now he was acclaimed in Sydney as a hero from the just-concluded Burma Wars. Brisbane declared himself enchanted with the colony, while the colony prepared to be *en fête* for the gallant commodore. The *Sydney Gazette* felt that *Warspite* 'sets off our Harbour to great advantage'; her great guns startled Sydney with their unexpected uproar on Sunday, the 5th of November, when they were fired for Guy Fawkes; morning and evening her band across the water enlivened the town with gay and martial airs.

The brigs and their escort had not been gone long when on the 19 November there arrived in the harbour H.M.S. *Success*, 28 guns, providing a welcome stimulus to the trade of the town by landing 20,000 pounds of specie to replace the colony's Spanish dollars and ease the shortage of British coin. She had been sent from England to carry relief to the scurvy-stricken settlement, Melville Island, in Australia's tropical waters in the north, established at the instance of the East India Company as a trading port with the Malays.³ *Success*'s newly appointed com-

¹ Darling's secret instructions to his officers for occupying Westernport and King George's Sound, 4.11.26 (*I.H.R.A.*, vol. xii, p. 701). These were in accordance with Bathurst's instructions to Darling, 1.3.26 (*ibid.*, pp. 192-4); in explanation of these, Bathurst wrote, 'I deem it necessary to address to you a private Communication in order that you may be apprised of the motives which have induced me to select this particular time for sending out the Instructions, which will be conveyed to you by the present opportunity. The sailing of two French Ships on a Voyage of discovery have led to the consideration how far our distant possessions in the Australian Seas may be prejudiced by any designs, which the French may entertain of establishing themselves in that quarter, and more especially on that part of the Coast of New South Wales, which has not yet received any Colonists from this Country . . .' (*ibid.*, p. 194). For the same reason Darling was also required to obtain information about Shark's Bay, on the west coast.

² *Sydney Gazette*, 18.10.26, et seq.

³ *I.H.R.A.*, vol. xii, pp. 224-7.

manding officer was Captain James Stirling: had any other officer been chosen, Western Australia might have been left to the sun, the rain, and the natives for years to come. As it was, because the monsoon delayed the Melville Island task, because the British distrusted the French, and because Stirling was a patriot, a man of energy, and an optimist, the solitude of the west was soon to end.

Stirling was a Scotsman, a native of St. Andrews, and at the time of his visit to Sydney was thirty-six years old. He had seen service in many parts of the world, but this was his first experience of the beginnings of a European settlement. He found 'the excitations of a new country' both interesting and amusing; political existence, he noted, was here only beginning; the opinions and habits formed in a youthful community were not necessarily the same as those held for gospel in the ancient society it had derived from on the other side of the world.¹

The Sydney that he observed with philosophic enjoyment was only three years older than himself, for it was barely thirty-nine years since Admiral Phillip, with the first convict ships, had discovered Sydney Cove. Now, in 1826, the colony had reached a stage of transition in its development from a purely penal settlement under autocratic rule into a mixed community of convicts and free or freed persons beginning to struggle out of official control towards the far goal of constitutional government. Free settlers now plied their trades in the town; professional gentlemen practised as doctors and pleaded in the courts, and with their womenfolk exchanged the hospitalities of pleasant homes. The cruder days were gone; not only political consciousness, but social amenities, were increasing fast. There were race meetings, open to the populace; there was an amateur musical society that gave public performances attended by the fashionable of the town; there was a newly opened coffee house, in the French style, for the convenience of the beaux and belles of Sydney's gentry; there were shops where ladies could buy their green tea, West Indian sugar, and other household stores, their sprigged muslins and tippets and Leghorn hats, and gentlemen their nankeens and beavers and Brazil tobacco, their saddles and fowling pieces and their snuff. More important developments were the two independent and highly critical newspapers, *The*

¹ Stirling, 4.8.28, in *Letters to his brothers John and Walter, 1828-1838* (M.L.).

Australian and *The Monitor*, rivals of the semi-official *Sydney Gazette*, where grievances could be ventilated and citizens could press for trial by jury and other reforms that would give to themselves much more power and to the governor much less. In the historic Sudds-Thomson affair, Stirling was to see for himself, just after his arrival, a typical battle between the rigid governor, General Sir Ralph Darling, and those champions of democratic freedom, Dr. Wardell and William Wentworth—he whom Thomas Henty had correctly guessed to be an oppositionist to the Government.¹

But alongside evidences of growth—the free press that Darling failed to muzzle, the Agricultural Society, the annual wool sales; the elegant dinners of the Turf Club and the grand balls at Government House—the prison paraphernalia of the earliest days remained: indeed, since 1821 the rigour of punishment had actually been increased to deter deliberate courting of the sentence of transportation by those outcasts of society to whom life in England, in or out of gaol, offered only what was worse. The lash and the chain gang, the stocks, the treadmill, and the gallows, were still part of the colony's accepted equipment, a military detachment was still maintained as a protection against possible revolt by convicts who continued to arrive by hundreds while free settlers trickled in only by tens.

The ships that brought convicts and merchandise to Van Diemen's Land and New South Wales sailed again for England northwards through the dangerous Torres Straits, calling at Batavia, Madras, or Canton with cargoes of whale oil and seal-skins from Macquarie Island and Bass Strait; those that took the direct route homewards by the Horn carried the bales of fine wool grown by the sheep magnates John Macarthur, Cox, Lawson, the McIntyres, and settlers like the Hentys' friend, John Street of Woodlands, Bathurst Plains—and some of this wool was shorn from the progeny of sheep imported from the

¹ Sudds and Thomson, two private soldiers, committed a robbery in order to graduate from the army to what was thought to be the less irksome life of a civilian felon. Others had done the same. To put an end to such actions among the ranks, Darling inflicted on these two a punishment of such humiliation and severity that when Sudds died in prison a few days later there was an outcry and Darling was popularly held to blame. He was cleared by an official inquiry held in England after an interval of nine years, but the ugly incident remains linked to his name (*Scott*, pp. 111-12).

celebrated merino flocks of Mr. Thomas Henty of Sussex.¹ Local citizens travelled in these overseas vessels between Launceston, Hobart Town, and Sydney, or took passages in the colonial brigs and schooners that linked headquarters to Van Diemen's Land, Norfolk Island, Moreton Bay, and other small posts to the north of Sydney. Only in the summer season, when the strong westerlies no longer prevailed, did vessels regularly attempt the difficult and uncertain voyage west along New Holland's southern coasts to Mauritius and the Cape of Good Hope. Sealers and whalers recklessly worked the coasts of Bass Strait and New Zealand, bringing their cargoes into Launceston or Port Jackson for reshipment overseas. Now and then a missionary vessel sailed to New Zealand or as far into the Pacific as Tonga Tabu in the Friendly Isles. And, coming or going on varied duties, there was usually one of His Majesty's smaller ships of war.

When Stirling arrived in *Success* and anchored close to the towering *Warspite* and to *Volage*, gaieties arranged in honour of Sir James Brisbane had been suspended, for the commodore was ill, dying of dysentery contracted in the Burma campaign. For a week or two the *Gazette* published bulletins of diminishing hopefulness until a black-edged issue announced his death on 19 December. Shortly afterwards, *Warspite* and *Volage*, carrying the bereaved Brisbane family as far as Valparaiso, continued on their way.²

But while the commodore yet lay dying, Sydney was startled by an event of a different kind. *L'Astrolabe*, French man-of-war, sailed up the harbour and anchored beside the British ships. Like wild-fire, the news spread that the corvette had put into various places along the Australian coast; soon it was said that her commander, Captain Dumont d'Urville, had hoisted the

¹ A note in Francis Henty's 1880 diary says that the first shipments of Henty merinos were sent to New South Wales in the *Lusitania*, the *Orelia*, and the *Hugh Crawford*: those by the *Crawford* arrived while *Warspite* was in the harbour and were advertised for sale in the *Sydney Gazette*, 9.12.26. Francis does not mention some that were sent by the *Shand* in 1825.

² *D.N.B.* states in error that Brisbane died in Penang. His death took place in 'Mr. Lord's large mansion in Macquarie Place', rented by Brisbane on his arrival (*Sydney Gazette*, 25.10.26) and probably the building seen through the bamboos in Plate 15, *Government House, Sydney*. At his death the admiral left 'an amiable and excellent Widow, two interesting Daughters, and a gallant Son, to bewail the irreparable loss of an affectionate Husband and a tender Father' (ibid. 20.12.26).

French flag at King George's Sound—some believed at Westernport also and even nearer, at Jervis Bay.¹ d'Urville, paying his respects to the Governor, was closely questioned; the Frenchman found Darling *d'une politesse assez froide*, surprised at the freedom of d'Urville's movements on the coast, and very disturbed to learn that he had seen no sign of the colonial brigs at Westernport or in Bass Strait.² Clearly, Darling remained unconvinced of the innocence of d'Urville's aims: he wrote to Bathurst that—

Captain d'Urville would lead me to believe that the object of his expedition is solely for the purpose of general science. It is perhaps a fortunate event that he has found His Majesty's Ships *Warspite*, *Success*, and *Volage* lying here, knowing at the same time that the *Fly* has sailed with the Expedition to the Southward, as he may in consequence be more circumspect in his proceedings than he otherwise would have been.³

On Wednesday the *Gazette* hastened to remove the anxiety that 'pervaded all classes', declaring that there was not an iota of truth in the report of the French flag-raising; *l'Astrolabe* had put into Port Jackson simply to refresh and refit in the course of a voyage whose main object was scientific research. After this reassurance for home consumption, the semi-official *Gazette* uttered warnings for the benefit of any foreign eye that might fall upon them:

Were the French, or any other power, inclined to colonize in any part of Australia—that is, the island on which we are established—such a measure must be at the certain risk of an irruption between these powers and old England. . . .

Others were a little more welcoming than the Governor and the *Gazette*. d'Urville, moored beside the British warships, received prompt courtesy calls from Stirling and from young Captain Dundas of *Volage*—*deux officiers d'un excellent ton*; ashore, he and his colleagues were hospitably entertained by Sydney citizens, some of whom were d'Urville's friends from his previous visit as second officer on board the same vessel when named *Coquille*. He dined with Stirling aboard *Success*; with Sydney's leading host, Captain Piper, at his *magnifique habitation* and

¹ Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage*, vol. i, p. 353.

² Montemont, *Voyages*, vol. xviii, p. 154; d'Urville, *Voyage*, vol. i, pp. 153–277 and vol. ii, p. 2.

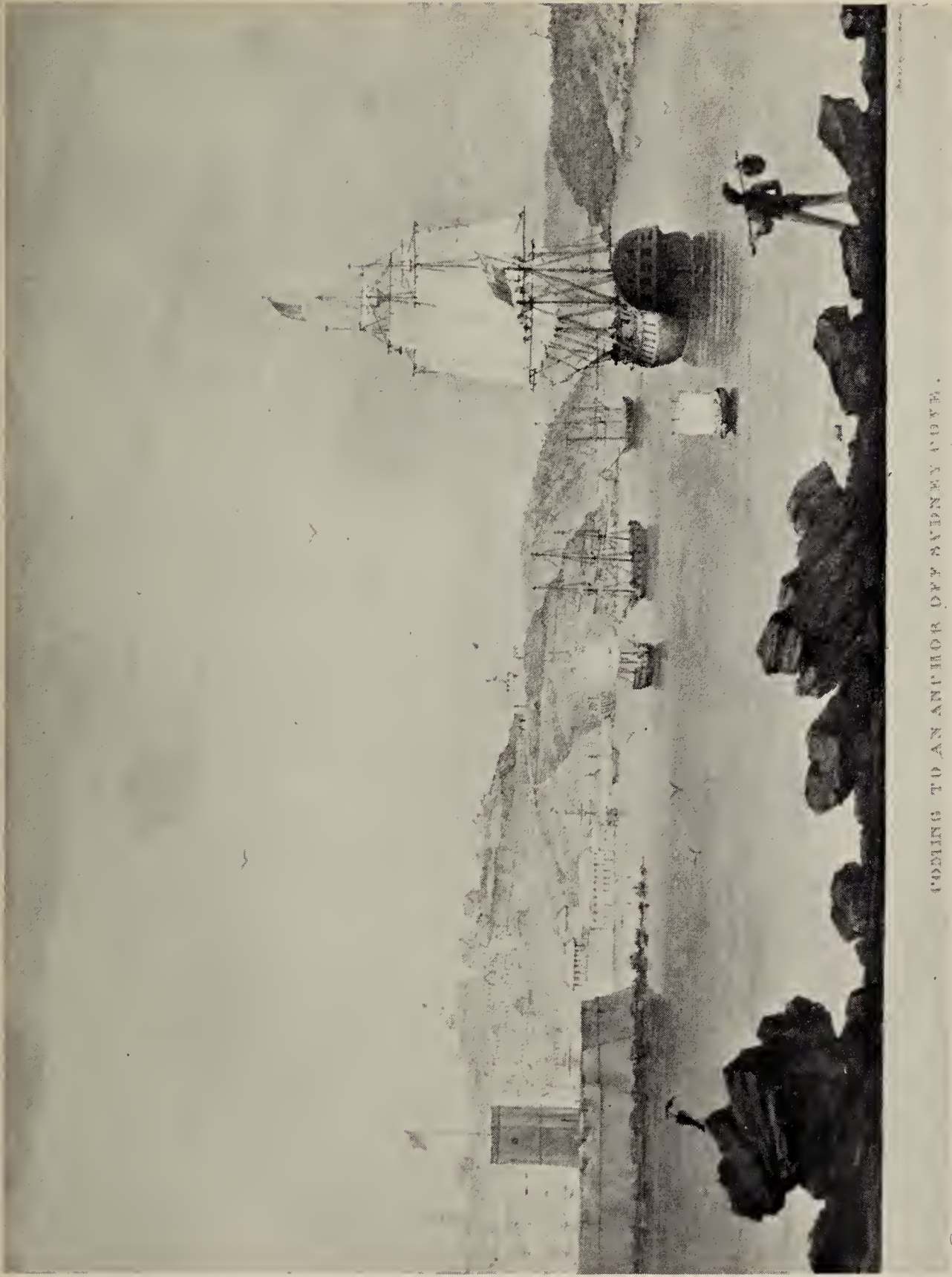
³ *I H.R.A.*, vol. xii, p. 730.

travelled in Captain Piper's coach and four to Parramatta to visit the Rev. Mr. Marsden and to dine with Archdeacon Scott; he walked in the Botanical Gardens with its director, Mr. Fraser, and strolled among *les jolies bosquets de Mme Macquarie* with his compatriot, M. Rossi, Sydney's Chief of Police; he talked with Captain Barlow of the 3rd Regiment, just returned from Melville Island with a reassuring report of that tropic outpost: he even dined with the uneasy Governor himself.

But to d'Urville hospitalities received and perforce returned were merely a delay to scientific work: he fidgeted to be off on *l'Astrolabe's* two real missions—the survey of the coasts of New Zealand and the search for relics of the long-lost explorer Lapérouse. All that they had accomplished in New Holland, though important, ‘n'étaient à nos yeux que le prélude de notre vaste entreprise’; they lingered as long as they did only because of the difficulty of getting stores for the next part of the voyage. *L'Astrolabe* needed caulking, but any available caulkers were busy with the English ships; more anchors and chains were vital for safety among coral reefs, but the Commissary-General was unable to grant them from the stores without the Governor's consent and Darling's reply to d'Urville's request had at first been equivocal. At the end of seventeen days, however, the ship was ready for sea—anchors and chains, salt, coffee, rum, vegetables, weevilly biscuit, water, and all. There had been a ceremony in recognition of *l'Astrolabe's* services to nautical science; English speeches had been made, French commemorative medals, struck by France's Minister of Marine, had been bestowed on those to whom d'Urville owed thanks for help.¹ Finally, there had been a dinner, given by the officers of His Most Christian Majesty Charles X's ship, *l'Astrolabe*, at which loyal toasts were honoured by French and British in convivial unison until 2 a.m. Later that same day, *l'Astrolabe* resumed her voyage.

She had gone, but suspicion remained. Perhaps d'Urville's officers, off duty, had shown themselves less exclusively devoted to science than he; they may have talked with indiscreet enthusiasm of the empty harbours they had seen and surveyed. However that may be, even those Sydney citizens inclined to accept d'Urville's assurance that his voyage had no political

¹ Dumont d'Urville, op. cit., vol. i, p. 54; *Sydney Gazette*, 23.12.26.



GOING TO AN ANCHOR OFF SYDNEY COVE.

By courtesy of the Trustees, Mitchell Library
I I. WARSHIPS IN SYDNEY COVE, 1826

The ship in the foreground is thought to be almost certainly *Warspite*

From '*Views in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land*' by Augustus Earle, London, 1830



12. VIEW OF THE ENTRANCE TO SYDNEY COVE, 1826

From 'Voyage de la Corvette l'Astrolabe, by Dumont d'Urville



13. GOVERNMENT HOUSE, SYDNEY, 1826

The building behind the bamboos on the extreme right is probably the home of Simeon Lord, occupied at this time by Sir James Brisbane

From 'Voyage de la Corvette l'Astrolabe'

significance had been stirred by his visit to a realization that it was time England was roused to make use of those harbours herself.¹

¹ Comments of the *Australian*, quoted by d'Urville (op. cit., vol. i, p. 352). Darling's suspicions of d'Urville remained (*I H.R.A.*, vol. xiii, p. 304). Mrs. John Macarthur, writing 16.12.26 of the presence in the harbour of the Frenchmen, says 'They profess to be in search of objects of natural history', and seems uncertain of what to believe (*Macarthur Papers*, M.L.).

STIRLING'S 'HESPERIA'

JUST before d'Urville's arrival, Darling had suggested to the Colonial Office that 'to prevent the interference of any Foreign Power' his commission should be replaced by another, *ante-dated*, and altered to describe the whole of Australia as within his government—thus urging annexation by paper only and by stealth.¹ Stirling, equally a believer in the importance of forestalling the French, wanted to make it a decent reality, by colonization and development. Doubtless both men, during the first days of *l'Astrolabe*'s visit, exchanged confidential views on the Frenchman and his plans; as a result, and while d'Urville was still in Sydney, Stirling submitted a written proposal to Darling that Swan River, on the western coast of 'this island', should be immediately seized to prevent any foreign power from taking it first. He urged that Swan River had great commercial and strategic advantages in its position relative to the Cape of Good Hope, the Peninsula of India, the Malay Islands, and the China trade—advantages that Sydney, isolated on New Holland's east coast, did not possess. On the west coast vessels, whatever their destination, were assured, by the two prevailing wind streams, of speedy voyages across the adjacent seas, whereas during most of the year strong westerlies cut off Sydney from commercial communication with the Indian Ocean. Stirling reminded the governor that no British officer had explored the west coast between Cape Leeuwin and Shark's Bay—perhaps it was not the place to add that any available knowledge of that Dutch-discovered country was due to surveys by successive French scientific ships. Nobody, he said, knew the nature of the soil or what it would produce, but it was 'fair to assume' that, as it was in the same parallel and on the same island, it was similar to New South Wales and therefore that European labour could produce there goods that the neighbouring tropical countries would be glad to have in exchange for their own. From Swan

¹ Darling to Hay, private letter 9.10.26, and to Bathurst 24.11.26 (*I H.R.A.*, vol. xii, pp. 639, 700).

River, India could receive horses and wheat, possibly coal and iron; Mauritius, livestock and grain; the Malay Islands, 'various articles adapted to their wants'; China could obtain wool, hemp, timber for shipping, and 'the produce of the ocean'. . . . He did not think it too much to say 'that it may hereafter be to the various countries in India that which the Colonies in North America once were to the West India Station'. Strategically, it was a region of great consequence. In that bracing climate, troops and seamen could be kept constantly in condition to 'pour upon' any neighbouring country, 'either for the Annoyance of an Enemy's Settlements or the protection of our own', and our healthy forces, warned from England by a single ship sailing swiftly because alone, could successfully engage a slow-moving enemy fleet sent from Europe to the Indian seas, debilitated as it would probably be by the long voyage and by scurvy. One last persuasive word: the expenses of such a settlement were not, he thought, likely to be great, and until it was self-supporting the necessities of life might be obtained cheaply from Timor or Java.

Until it was possible to carry out his Melville Island task, Stirling said he could think of no more useful public service than a brief survey of Swan River. He offered his most zealous exertions in furthering any plan on which His Excellency might decide.¹

The ship that carried d'Urville's account of his voyage, with four cases of specimens, to the French Ambassador in London, took also Darling's despatch to Lord Bathurst, endorsing Stirling's report and stating that he thought it best to let the 'confident and sanguine' Stirling go and find out whether Swan River were as eligible for a settlement as Stirling had been led to suppose. Darling said that he himself had no means of forming an opinion on the correctness of the data and would suspend judgment until Stirling's return, but he committed himself so far as to say that it was 'of great importance that so advantageous a position' should not be taken possession of by the French.²

So, in January 1827, Stirling set sail in *Success* for the west to decide whether the Swan River region resembled the rest of the barren coast that the Dutch and French navigators had con-

¹ Stirling's proposed expedition to Swan River (*I H.R.A.*, vol. xii, pp. 777-80).

² *Ibid.*, p. 774.

demned, or was indeed the desirable land of his dreams. He took with him, as a qualified judge of the soil and its products, the Colonial Botanist, Mr. Charles Fraser. *Success* was away from Port Jackson for three months. Of that time, thirteen days were spent in exploring the Swan and, in the view of the party, all that they saw confirmed Stirling's happy conception of its value as a place for settlement. Making a hazardous and lucky entry through the unknown reefs off 'the Main', *Success* anchored safely under the island of Buache that Stirling now renamed Garden Island. Next day, he and his party of seventeen crossed the bar at the Swan's mouth and sailed up the river, dragging the cutter and gig over the many shoals and finding the banks more and more beautiful the farther they went from the sandy coast. They had 'delicious weather, and an abundance of everything, including cheerfulness'. The scene, so different from the sterile surroundings of Sydney, delighted them all—the lofty trees, the bright green foliage of the shrubs, the blue summits of the hills not far off, and the wide grassy plains between river and hills; the abundant fish, flashing over the river's gravelly bed, the flocks of birds, the kangaroos too swift for capture, the traces of the cassowary, and, above all, the black swans. They made friends with the wary or hostile natives, answering angry cries with amicable signals, bugle calls, and genial shouts of 'How-do-you-do?' They made a garden on a tongue of land, planting potatoes and peach trees and many sorts of seed; they dined off roasted swans and slept in hammocks slung in unspoilt groves, risking the night air with no ill effects that the doctor could later perceive. They discovered another river, traversed areas of rich soil of great depth laced with fresh-water lagoons and running brooks, and walked with ease through open forest land to climb the rugged hills. When at last, on the seventh day, the narrowing river stopped their boat's progress, the whole party sorrowed that they had to leave the 'rich romantic country' and begin their journey back to the sandy margin by the sea.

When they returned to Sydney in April Stirling made his report to the Governor, appending one by the botanist, Fraser, that entirely supported his own opinion of the soil.¹ Two days later the *Gazette* published a column of information 'kindly

¹ *III H.R.A.*, vol. vi, pp. 551–84.

supplied by a Gentleman who accompanied the expedition', telling of the luxuriance of the many herbaceous plants, of the valleys rich beyond description and capable of producing any crop, of the vast number of springs, the deep red loam, and the likelihood of an abundance of copper. 'From the geographical description and situation of the place there is little doubt', said the *Gazette*, 'that at a future day, it will become an important British settlement.' Stirling already had a name for it—'Hesperia'—suggesting a land looking towards the western sun.

It was on these reports by a handful of men, eager to see but ill-equipped to interpret correctly what they saw, that a settlement was made: the colony of Swan River was to be founded on a picnic episode lasting less than two weeks.

Despite the warmth of Stirling's report and the Governor's covering despatch to the Colonial Office, the fate of Swan River hung in the balance for more than a year. At Downing Street, fear of French action seems to have been momentarily allayed and the expense of making a new settlement, far remote from Sydney, was a very real bogey to a government bent on cutting down costs. When Stirling got back to England and to a new colonial secretary, he found the Government's mind made up; it 'would be inexpedient on the score of expense' and was 'unnecessary with a view to any urgent interest' to attempt at present to occupy that part of New Holland's coast.¹ But Stirling's visit to Australia had inspired him with a very real appreciation of colonial life. It was not merely that his employment there had, as he told his brother, afforded him 'famous fun'; it was, he said, a country of all others where a man could be most certain that work would reward him with independence for himself and his children, with pleasant, interesting, and prosperous employment for his faculties and healthy enjoyment of all the simple elements of life. The only requisites were £2,000 and a stout heart, or, lacking the capital, a stout heart and an 'appointment of value, to fill the interim'.² He had seen all this for himself in New South Wales; doubtless he was convinced that in a few years it would be the same at Swan River. He had no intention of letting the Swan River proposal drop.

No doubt Stirling's persistence with the Government was due partly to hoped-for benefits to himself. It is not surprising that a

¹ *III H.R.A.*, vol. vi, p. 585.

² *Stirling*, 23.8.28.

new country, with all its chances, should have attracted an active man with a recent experience of several years of unemployment in England on half pay. Before leaving Sydney he had also applied to the Secretary of State for the Colonies for the post of governor of the new settlement if it were made.¹

Whether the Government would or would not make a settlement was for Stirling a matter of exasperating doubt. He voiced his irritation in a letter to his brother written in the summer of 1828:

About three weeks ago I persuaded the Colonial Office people into the necessity of immediately occupying that Territory and I left town convinced that they would set about it immediately. I returned there last week but found them trembling at the thought of increased expenditure and nothing as yet done in the business.

In October, with the Government hovering on the verge of a decision, he wrote:

I still find myself in all my previous darkness for all the persons whom I knew in town connected with the Colonial Office or with New South Wales were absent last week and I returned thence finding that I could not do anything relating to the new settlement until after those gentlemen had concluded their autumn vacations.

He prevailed at last: the west coast was to be annexed. Suddenly the period of vacillation was over, succeeded by days of hurried preparation. A chart of Swan River was copied at high speed; according to one of the young naval hydrographers who copied it,² government departments hummed with rumours of French intentions, government officials—all 'wishing to have the Colony established but no one liking to incur the responsibility'—badgered each other 'from the Colonial Secretary downwards', while the Admiralty demurred at providing a warship for the task, as Stirling had advised. The Admiralty notwithstanding, Captain Charles Howe Fremantle of the frigate *Challenger* was ordered to proceed forthwith from Cape Town to Swan River to take possession of 'the Western side of New Holland'. An official party was to follow from England, the troops travelling in H.M.S. *Sulphur* and the civil establishment in the hired trans-

¹ *I H.R.A.*, vol. xiii, p. 307.

² John Septimus Roe, Lieut., R.N. (1797-1878), about to be appointed Surveyor-General of the Settlement, in letters to his father, the Rev. James Roe, of Newbury, Berks.

port *Parmelia* in charge of the future settlement's governor; and the governor appointed was Stirling, the obvious man for the post.

Accordingly, on the 2nd of May 1829, Captain Fremantle hoisted the Union Jack at the mouth of the Swan, taking possession of 'the whole of the Western Coast of New Holland' in the name of George IV. By this strangely simple act 'every inch of the Island' now became the property of the British Crown.¹

¹ The *Sydney Gazette* had claimed it seventeen months earlier, flinging at d'Urville the declaration that 'we were never generous enough to indulge in the conception of permitting any foreign power to share an inch of this continental territory: we wanted it, and still do require it, for our own Monarch . . . we are fully borne out when we state the fact, that the whole continent of Australia is the exclusive property of the British Crown; and that there is not so much as an inch upon which either French, Spanish, Dutch, Russian, or New Zealander, can dare legally to set a foot' (*Sydney Gazette*, 6.12.26).

CERTAIN WILD AND UNOCCUPIED LANDS

IT is difficult to believe that not much more than a hundred years ago there were good harbours, in temperate latitudes, that were unoccupied by white man; waters where a sailor could let go his anchor unchallenged, row unhindered along a shore where no white rival watched; choose according to his own whim the spot to plant a flag or build the first huts of a future town. When young Captain Fremantle in the frigate *Challenger* approached Cockburn Sound, off Swan River, in April 1829, he found no Frenchmen and there was nothing to stop him but a contrary wind and the hazard of sunken rocks.¹ The master, sent to find a passage through the intricate approaches of the Sound, buoyed off the rocks and returned to the *Challenger* to bring her in. And then, 'Never', says Fremantle, since I have been at sea have I ever witnessed anything to equal the carelessness and stupidity of the Master; *he placed a buoy on a rock and then steered for the buoy and ran the ship immediately on it.* It was a thousand chances that we escaped being knocked to pieces, which must have been the case had it not been beautiful weather. *The Master deserves to be hanged immediately.* . . . Nothing has annoyed me so much since I entered the Service.

Fortunately the *Challenger* floated off undamaged; Fremantle was able to anchor on fine holding ground within the Sound under the lee of Garden Island and to recover his temper by joining his crew in slaughtering the seals disporting on the island's beach. When the wind dropped, his party rowed the nine miles to the mainland and set up their flag on a hillock beside the starboard head of the river's mouth, built a fort as a defence against possible attack by the natives, and there

¹ *Fremantle*, whose *Diary* is the source of this account unless otherwise stated. The chart copied so hastily by young Roe, as he thought for the Governor of New South Wales, had gone to Cape Town with the Admiralty's instructions and was used by Fremantle in approaching Cockburn Sound (*Fremantle*, p. 31).

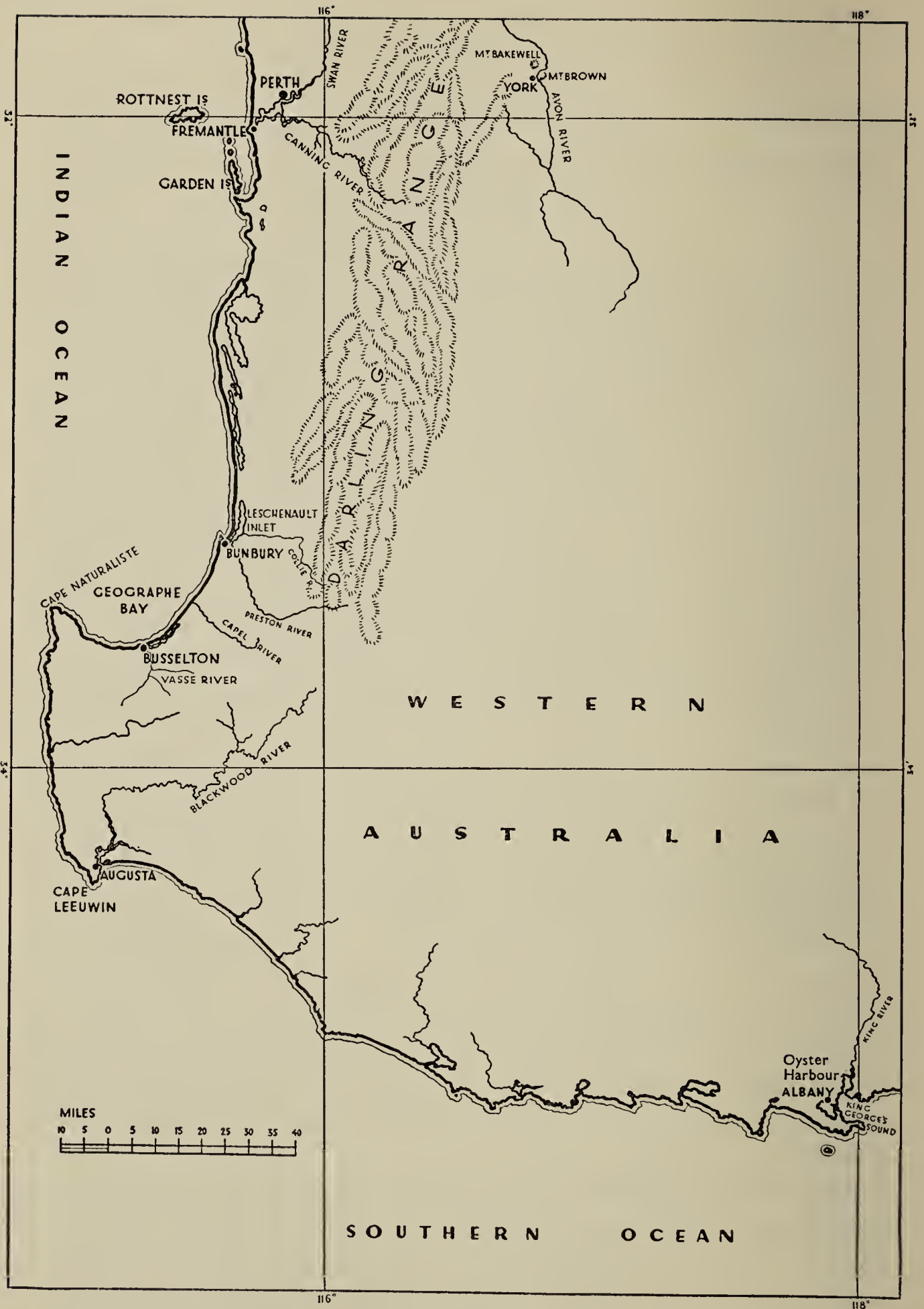
awaited the arrival of Stirling and his settlers in the *Parmelia* and the soldiers and their families in the *Sulphur* sloop.

A month later, a lookout posted on a high point of Garden Island sighted the *Parmelia* approaching the land. In trying to find a passage into the Sound, despite Fremantle's urgent warning that there was none at that spot, Stirling drove the ship straight on to the rocks. Working frantically, *Challenger's* boats and crew, with the *Parmelia's*, lightened the ship and attempted to get her over the bank, without success. Some of the women and children were transferred to the *Challenger* and another large party was landed on the small island of Carnac, where they had to stay, hungry, frightened, and wet through, for four days and nights. Mrs. Stirling was one of those who remained in the *Parmelia* until at midnight the ship's situation became perilous in the growing storm. Fremantle now offered to take her and the rest of the women to his own ship. They went in the jolly boat, getting aboard the *Challenger* at two in the morning: Mrs. Stirling must have carried with her the baby son born on board the *Parmelia* only two months before. Stirling, blaming his own 'overconfident pilotage', spent a dreadful night, expecting the end of his ship and of his career.¹ In the morning, Fremantle, returning wearily to the *Challenger* and bringing Stirling with him, found his cabin 'full of all kinds of women and in terrible confusion' and turned half of them out; one more night of tremendous wind, and his cabin became 'a perfect pigsty'. The squalor of the wailing children and their distressed mothers was more than he could bear; when at daylight the now rudderless *Parmelia* floated off after eighteen hours of lifting and crashing on the reef and was moored close to the *Challenger*, he sent them all back to their own ship—all except Mrs. Stirling and the wife of the Harbour Master to-be, Captain Currie, R.N. These two ladies remained on board and on the following Sunday were present at prayers.

On Monday the sore-tried Fremantle nearly had the whole of his rescue work to go through again, for Captain Dance of H.M.S. *Sulphur*, arriving off the coast in tempestuous weather when there was a great sea and 'dangers appeared in all directions',² rashly brought his ship in and touched as he came

¹ *Stirling*, 7.9.29.

² *Sulphur's* company had anticipated another danger. On their passage from



through the passage. Fremantle and other watchers thought he could not avoid being wrecked, but he escaped and joined the *Challenger* and *Parmelia* in the security of the Sound. In Fremantle's view it was more than he deserved; Dance, he said, talked a great deal of nonsense that night when the party all met in the *Challenger* for dinner—all except Mrs. Dance, who kept her cabin in the *Sulphur*, afflicted with an aching head.

As soon as shelters were erected on the island, Stirling disembarked his people, the hurry of landing, he says, reviving their spirits by giving them something else to think and talk about than the fright of their arrival. The troops under Captain Irwin were also landed from the *Sulphur*, relieving the *Challenger*'s marines from guard duty at the fort beside the river mouth, the spot that Stirling now named Fremantle and chose as the settlement's future port.¹ But, except for the soldiers at the fort, everyone remained on Garden Island; here, it was decided, they were to stay until the weather calmed down and a general move of stores and people could be made to the mainland nine miles off across the boisterous sea. All that wintry June and for half of July the wind blew from the north-west and the rain fell in torrents. The people, few of whom, says Stirling, had ever slept outside four comfortable walls, huddled in tents and log huts built in clearings among the thick scrub, ate the salt provisions of His Majesty's Navy served out in equal rations to everyone from the Governor to his shoe-black, as the *Sulphur*'s surgeon said, and gratefully drank the rain-water that filled the wells dug in the sand. It was cold, and it was more moist, according to Surgeon Collie, than corresponds with an English lady's idea of comfort.² Mrs. Stirling was glad to crouch over the fire with her babies, and the Governor, to keep his candle burning, was obliged to carry an umbrella as he moved about under his leaky thatched roof.³ The length of the winter season was to be

England they found that 'The Speculation ran high at the Cape that a French expedition which had touched there in January last had taken previous possession of Swan River, and this idea seemed to gain credit among us as we advanced. It was therefore with varied feelings that, as we stood in here yesterday, we ascertained that H.M.S. *Challenger* and our consort the *Parmelia* were the only vessels at the anchorage' (*Collie*, 9.6.29, written 'at anchor under Buache or Garden Island, Cockburn Sound').

¹ *Stirling*, 7.9.29; *Fremantle*, p. 26; *III H.R.A.*, vol. vi, p. 615.

² *Collie*, 9.6.29.

³ *Stirling*, 7.9.29.

a great surprise; so was the good health of the company, bad weather and poor shelter notwithstanding.

Mrs. Mark Currie, the Harbour Master's wife, began to keep a diary on the day that she and her husband landed on the island to live, more than five weeks after their arrival.¹ 'July 8th', she wrote, 'Left the *Parmelia*. Dined at Governor's and slept under His Majesty's Canvass within our own walls.' The sweetness of privacy, even in a tent, was precious after seven months of public living on board the transport. 'Breakfasted and dined by ourselves' is her entry for the next day. To cook these breakfasts and dinners the existence of a servant in the background, unsung, can be assumed; but young Mrs. Currie, the most domestic of colonists, had plenty to do. Affectionate and self-effacing, her diary chiefly records the comings and goings of her husband—'My own Marco off to "Fremantle" without covering or prospect of shelter for the night! Oh dear me!'—and notes the progress of their animals—the cow and its calf, the goat and kid, the four merinos, the little collection of ducks, hens, pigeons, and guinea-fowl, and the six rabbits from the Cape; the planting of radishes and lettuce, the harvesting of the first turnips—all the small events so vital in the lives of those who are creating a home in the wilderness. The diary also records the hospitalities that came about as soon as people ceased to be herded together and were dispersed in their own homes. Two days after the Curries landed there was a grand dinner to the Governor and others given by the officers of the *Sulphur*, at which thirty people sat down and afterwards danced, listened to music, and played cards until 2 a.m. On the 13th the Curries entertained the Governor and Mrs. Stirling and on the 17th gave a dinner to Captain Fremantle, to which Captain and Mrs. Dance were invited. Sometimes there were variations in the diet of salt meat—a kangaroo dinner, a meal of black cockatoo. And on the 20th Mrs. Currie announces

The first races in Western Australia! My Marco rode the Governor's Pony against Lieut. Preston's and won the match out and out; the first winner in the Colony!

On the King's birthday, 12 August, the colony acquired a

¹ *Currie*. Jane Eliza Currie was the daughter of Charles Boynton Wood, and was married to Captain Currie, 14.1.29, just before the *Parmelia* sailed (*O'Byrne*).

capital. It was twelve miles up the river and at the request of Sir George Murray, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, was named Perth after his native town. All the gentlemen, says Mrs. Currie, went off up the Swan to attend the ceremony. More than one of the gentlemen described it in letters home:

The Governor and all the Officers went up the river and fixed upon a spot near Mount Eliza . . . and at half past four the ceremony commenced. Mrs. Dance, the only lady who ventured so far up the river, was proposed by the Governor to christen the town, which she did by holding an axe, and the Governor guiding her hand, she then gave one blow with it upon a large tree, which was cut down for the purpose; the soldiers fired a volley, and all present gave three cheers. The Governor made a speech upon the occasion, and thus ended the ceremony. After which he gave a dinner to all the Officers.¹

Others than Mrs. Dance may have longed to venture; it is unlikely that Mrs. Stirling willingly conceded to any other woman the honour of 'felling' that forest tree, but her baby was still an infant; Mrs. Currie and Mrs. Roe were expecting their first babies in the coming summer; Mrs. Brown, already the mother of two children, was to have a third in the early spring: the privilege had perforce to be left to the carefree Mrs. Dance. As Mrs. Currie remarks in her diary, 'Much too bad!!'²

The heaving down and repairing of the damaged *Parmelia* was Fremantle's last task before leaving the settlement to its own resources. At his second attempt he got the *Challenger* safe out of Cockburn Sound and on her way to Calcutta, while Mrs. Currie watched him anxiously past the danger point from the top of the island's high hill. Her diary now begins to record the names of ships as they arrived with the first parties of settlers—genuine settlers, as distinct from the civil and military establishment.

¹ Captain Dance to Under-Secretary Horace Twiss, 10.9.29, and another unnamed correspondent (*Letters from Swan River*); also *Collie*, 21.1.30.

² The Perth Tree: some twenty years ago the late Queen Mary, pursuing her loved occupation of treasure-hunting in London's curiosity shops, came across a wooden box about the size of a jewel-case and bearing the following inscription on the lid: 'This box was made from the tree which was cut down at Swan River in 1829, by His Excellency Sir James Stirling, for the purpose of laying the foundation of the Capital of Western Australia.' The box, which is of sheoak, maker and first owner unknown, was presented by Queen Mary to the Western Australian Government and is displayed in Perth's Public Library. It will be noted that the inscription ignores the part played by 'the only lady who ventured', so conspicuous at the time: as Mrs. Currie would say, Much too bad!!

Calista, with 60 people, the *Lotus*, with 150, the *Marquis of Anglesey*, with 130, came all too soon for the comfort of the overworked Governor and his Surveyor-General, Lieut. J. S. Roe, R.N. How to find accessible good land for all was the problem. The sandy coast was now recognized as of no value to the farmer, and, however fertile the unknown interior might turn out to be, only river frontages were of any use while the river remained the settlement's only road: and there were not nearly enough river frontages to go round. The disappointed settlers, who had expected a paradise, now joined in a chorus of condemnation of that Mr. Fraser whose botanical account of Swan River had so raised their hopes. An army surgeon friend of Fraser's, writing from the Swan, was sorry to tell him that his statements were not at all relished by the settlers, who had expected to find a highly fertile country and were now satisfied that 'Sand and sand and sand' was 'everywhere to be found'.¹ The sand became a byword, the subject of stories that, carried back to the Cape, alarmed intending settlers calling there on their way to the Swan. A child, it is said, looking from the ship's deck at the dazzling white of the Swan River shore, asked what strange country was this, where trees in full leaf grew from ground covered with snow; a sailor remarked that all of Fremantle could be put through an hour glass in a day. Despondency and resentment filled the settlers, whether they strove ineffectually to find land for themselves or waited among their heaped goods and chattels for news from the official exploring parties sent to look for more rivers and better soil. The difficulties of those first days for both settlers and officers were, in Stirling's own words, 'enough to appal the stoutest hearts'. Most of the people, he thought, were of a sort to make a success of things, but it was a 'fearfully dangerous experiment to come so far to a country wholly unknown, and with habits in general formed in other modes of life as wide from this as Earth and Heaven'. But though three months of reality had dimmed Stirling's optimism he maintained that upon the whole the country had proved such as he had represented it a year before: 'The experiment is not yet sufficiently advanced to speak with confidence, but I have no doubt that the Settlement must and will prosper most

¹ Robert M. Davis, Assistant Surgeon, 39th Regiment (Pamphlet, J. H. Maiden, *The Sydney Botanical Gardens, Biographical Notes*, I).

rapidly' once the dangerous period of infancy was past. There had been no sickness—he wrote before the summer brought flies and their consequences; the climate was cool and bracing—it was then spring; the natives were so far not mischievous and kept aloof—the first clashes were yet to come. Obviously, he had no realization that the rapid prosperity he looked for was impossible, for the simple reason that the country was unsuited to agriculture as practised at that time. Stirling and his officers, with all their energy, could not find good land because, except on the river banks, it was not there.

Even if good soil had been abundant, it was too late now for planting; the *Parmelia* was dispatched to Java for provisions and stock. It was clear that for some time to come the settlement would have to depend for supplies on Van Diemen's Land and the Cape to feed the numerous settlers that, from all Stirling could learn, were shortly to arrive.¹

Early in October 1829 Mrs. Currie records that she sold a dozen each of duck and guinea-fowl eggs at Fremantle and that by a ship from Van Diemen's Land a friend had sent a welcome present of flour, potatoes, and ale. On the 12th she reports the arrival of three vessels—the *Orelia* from Hobart Town, the *Cumberland* from Bombay, and a ship from England, with settlers, the *Caroline*.

¹ *Stirling*, 7.9.29.



From the Nan Kivell Collection, Canberra

14. BIVOUAC ON SWAN RIVER, 1827

Aquatint from drawing by J. R. Clause, Surgeon of Success



By courtesy of the Trustees, Mitchell Library

15. COCKBURN SOUND, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, 1829

Showing Challenger and Sulphur at anchor off Garden Island

Sketch by Mrs. Mark Currie

Part IV

SWAN RIVER SETTLEMENT

1830-1832



I

VEXATION AND UNCERTAINTY

NEXT morning the *Caroline's* company must have been on deck by daylight, eagerly examining the shore. Across the water could be seen a collection of tents and huts gathered about a flagstaff on a small hill; below the hill, to one side the surf-barred river's mouth, to the other a wrecked emigrant ship, the *Marquis of Anglesey*, lying close inshore; curving lightly to the south, and to the north running apparently to infinity in an unbroken line, a white hem of sand; behind, a grey-green ridge dotted strangely with large fragments of white stone; beyond the ridge, a belt of timbered country of subdued colour stretching to a low range of grey-blue hills. It was a non-committal landscape, unencouraging to English eyes.

James Henty, keen and anxious as he undoubtedly was, had to possess himself until an hour when the officers of the settlement would be ready for business. In his diary, two pages of faintly pencilled words bring back that day, so long ago, when James landed in Western Australia and came face to face with fact. He filled in the early part of the morning by visiting the ship just come from Van Diemen's Land, the *Orelia*, and breakfasted with her commander, Captain William Hudson; James had some knowledge of both ship and captain, for Hudson had previously carried Henty sheep to Sydney and also James's letter telling Street that the family had decided on emigration. Perhaps it was from Hudson that James learnt that the huddle of tents across the water had been given the name of Fremantle,

and that to see the Governor he would have to find his way twelve miles up the river to the capital, called Perth. At breakfast he met a Mr. Gellibrand from Van Diemen's Land, charterer of the *Orelia* and owner of its cargo of cattle, horses, sheep-dogs, and timber for sale at Swan River and the Isle of France;¹ from both men he must have learnt much of fact and rumour about the new settlement, including some of the gossip and criticism of it already rife in Sydney, Launceston, and Hobart Town. By the time James went ashore it is probable that he knew that all was not going to be plain sailing. He took a walk round the little town—'as big as all Worthing', said his man, Bushby—and found 'not a single house built, nothing but tents and temporary sheds; the general appearance of the land indicates great poverty of soil. Spirits rather depressed'. A call on Captain Currie, the Harbour Master, in his office set up in the wrecked *Marquis of Anglesey*, did little to cheer him.² Currie recommended him to land his stock on the north side of the river, above the bar; but James was evidently not satisfied that the Harbour Master was competent to advise, for 'much perplexed for want of information' is his comment after their talk.

At three o'clock, with Mr. Dawson, *Sulphur's* mate, he took passage in *Sulphur's* boat that plied daily to Perth. Perhaps his spirits lightened as they left the sands and salty winds of Fremantle and wound upstream between high wooded banks, where strange birds sheltered and unknown flowers grew. Constant shoals made navigation hard, but as the boat got nearer to Perth the river became more and more lovely, finally opening out into a wide basin of water with trees crowding to the beaches' edge. Among those trees, on the right bank, were the tents of the capital, but two months old. The dwellings of 'the great officers of State', as another *Caroline* passenger wrote, were 'of as rude a structure as you can well imagine; merely

¹ William Gellibrand, father of the better-known Joseph Tice Gellibrand who was later Van Diemen's Land's first Attorney-General.

² Currie was appointed without pay. After the first few months he was only nominally Harbour Master, the duties being carried out by the deputy, Daniel Scott. Currie received £200 a year as a member of the Board of Counsel and Audit, then as Auditor and as Clerk of the Council. He and his wife returned to England in the *Sulphur* in 1832 (*W.A. Arch.*). The *Marquis of Anglesey* was used later as a prison for unruly servants (*Diary of Ann Whatley*, p. 12).

branches of trees stuck into the ground and covered with canvass'.¹ James made his way to the largish tent that was Stirling's and found him 'with his Lady, and was very civilly received. Two hours' pleasant conversation followed.' The all-important question of land grants, and the Hentys' grant in particular, must have been the chief subject of their talk.

Without doubt, Stirling was glad to make him welcome. The Henty family was an excellent example of the type of well-to-do emigrant that the British Government wished to attract to the Swan. Among the newcomers some had property, some—though not many—were farmers: few combined, as the Hentys did, agricultural skill and experience and property too. They had come prepared for hard work, and had brought to the colony capital in the form of cash, labourers, stock, and equipment to an amount that entitled them to claim more than 80,000 acres of land. But welcome though James Henty was, and although he had arrived well within the time-limit set for the bestowal of free grants, there was at present no land to grant him, for all the accessible surveyed land was already allotted. Three ships with three hundred passengers between them had arrived earlier than the *Caroline*—the *Calista* and the *Marquis of Anglesey* as long ago as August, and the *Lotus* but a few days since. Also, as James was soon to learn, much land had been given to naval and military officers on temporary duty at the Swan. Because of a request from his father, a small tract of land near Fremantle had been reserved for him by Stirling; on Stirling's recommendation, also, he took a town grant in Fremantle itself; but for his larger acres he learnt that he would have to wait until more land, as yet undiscovered, should be made available by explorations about to be carried out to the south. And the Governor advised him *not* to land his stock on the north side of the river's mouth, where he said the soil was bad and there was no water—so much for Captain Currie.

There the diary ends: but James recorded his first doings and impressions in three long letters sent by vessels leaving for England within a short time of each other by three different routes—the *Orelia* (2 November) via the Isle of France, the *Caroline* (7 November) via Timor, and the *Atwick* (15 November) via Ceylon. Inevitably there was much repetition of details

¹ Spencer Trimmer, in *Letters from Swan River*.

that it was important his father should have as soon as possible. The first letter arrived the following August, the second having come in May; the third shows no arrival date; all must have caused a good deal of concern at the farm. In all three, James began by listing for his father the animals that survived the voyage to scramble ashore south of the river, close to the 'Town': all the blood horses, one cart mare, two mules, two Alderney cows, the bull, the Devon calf, one hundred and thirty merino ewes, six rams, eight pigs, seven dogs, and about two dozen poultry.

They were all in a dreadful condition, especially the horses, and would need the utmost care if they were to recover. After being landed, one of the Rio mules had died, and one of the ewes; six precious ewes had been killed in one night by native wild dogs. Landing stock on the open roadstead was no easy task; it had been made no easier by what James called the vexatious and unaccommodating behaviour of Captain Fewson. Before the end of the voyage Fewson had fallen foul of most of the cuddy passengers; indeed, James said that he had 'behaved in a most unhandsome and infamous manner' and that only Morrah remained the captain's friend. Not only in the ship, but ashore, he was much disliked for his bad spirit and bullying ways. At Fremantle he had sold the flat-bottomed boat shipped for the express purpose of landing the stock and goods, giving the boat over to the buyer before the business of landing was half done. He had threatened to stave in some of James's casks, put into the ship's boat, and had

kept his word, having stove a Keg of Gin and a Cask of Salt and very much injured other things . . . if he were to get among my men in the dark I think he would certainly get a ducking.

Both Fewson and Morrah abused the Swan unmercifully, and Morrah, probably because of Fewson's influence, was not remaining and was going back with his 'crony' in the *Caroline*; the accounts they would give of the place when they got home would have to be received with caution. James expected to square matters a little by charging Fewson freight for the goods that should have been landed free in the flat-bottomed boat; but it was all very disagreeable and had kept him tied by the leg almost the whole time the ship was discharging. In addition, the owners in England had infringed the terms of the charter by

putting aboard 40 tons of freight more than the agreement allowed, a matter that his father would have to put right in London. A lady's letter of introduction to Captain Dance had resulted in an offer to James to put aboard the *Sulphur* any quantity of valuable property not deemed safe ashore: James asked that his father be good enough to let Jane acquaint the lady of Captain Dance's civility.

Like everyone else, James had hoped to find some sort of arrangements made for the reception of emigrant parties, but there was no shelter for man or beast until it was erected by himself and his men.

The Governor has behaved very civilly to me although in consequence of the first establishment being formed at Garden Island (which in fact is nothing but sand) and subsequently removed to a place they call Perth about 13 miles up the river nothing whatever was prepared for our arrival and we had nothing to place our property, stock or ourselves in; everybody lives in Tents, even the Governor, until his house is finished.

For many nights James slept rolled up in a waterproof cloak under the shelter of an umbrella: it seems unlikely that he brought the women and children ashore until the cloak and umbrella stage had been succeeded at least by tents.

Among the sparse red gums, close by the surf of the Southern Indian Ocean, they pitched their tents on the sand, and there a large storehouse was built, 60 feet long and 18 wide. In this James lived at one end and George Bushby, with his wife Mary, who 'did' for James, lived at the other. A second shed was put up farther off, about half a mile from Fremantle, where the horses and sheep were stabled at night. James had noted the heaps of goods lying about Fremantle exposed to the weather; he did not land his own cargo from the *Caroline* until his two weatherboard storehouses were ready about three weeks after the ship arrived. The weather was usually fine, with cool nights and mornings and great heat in the middle of the day; when it was wet the tents and huts leaked, but nobody took cold. In a letter to his parents, Bushby says

I am as happy and well, thank God, as I ever was in my life; we have plenty to eat and drink, and the Messrs. Henty behave, as far as we have seen at present, like gentlemen. I cannot say a word

against them; but our women are not so well satisfied, not being used to live in tents.

In their letters, both master and man talk of the black swans, the parrots, and the natives, who are, Bushby says, very civil but great thieves and in James's opinion are getting too familiar. James has no doubt that there are many fine shells on the coast if a person had time to collect them; Bushby says the wild flowers would make as handsome pot plants as ever he saw. Appetites are so good and the consumption of their stores of salt beef and pork so heavy that James will soon have to purchase, unless they can find a substitute: fish, very plentiful and a great treat to the men, can be got only by borrowing somebody else's net until their own gear arrives in the *Wanstead*—which, as it turned out, was not to be for three months. Only now and then is it possible to shoot duck, parrots, cockatoos, crows, and parroquets, or catch kangaroo rats, all considered great delicacies; little or no fresh meat is to be got, and a supply of salt meat for the labourers will be required for years to come. Van Diemen's Land potatoes are to be had for 2*d.* a pound; sea plants, described by Bushby as tasting like the French bean, with a leaf as long as your finger but three-square, are boiled for sauce; very good English porter is cheap at 1*s.* a pot. Bushby likes Swan River as well as England, for he has plenty of work and is never afraid of a job; he wants his bench screw and other tools sent out with Mr. Thomas Henty, if he has not yet come away. He hopes his brother Charles will come out with Mr. Henty, but he will be well advised to get married first: 'we have not one bachelor with us but who wishes himself married'. They celebrate Guy Fawkes Day with a 'glorious bonfire (for we cut wood where we like)'. Evidently George has no regrets; before his letter reaches Worthing there will be another child added to their two, 'if Mary proves lucky': and Mary—still it is to be hoped one of the gayest—with the Hentys to cook for and two little boys to guard from the perils of a new land, is much more comfortable and likes the country very well now that she no longer has to live in a tent.¹

With a good master, and certain of daily work and food,

¹ *Letters from Swan River*. Bushby's letter is identifiable through the signature George and Mary B—. James Henty's *Orelia* letter appeared in the same publication.

Bushby was content with this strange new world: not so James. Cautious man of business though he was, he had dreamt dreams, seen his future flocks feeding on broad acres about a spacious home, and the awakening was rude. Almost at once, he had to face the serious possibility of a complete change of plan, of leaving the Swan for one of the eastern colonies.

The Land here is very unpromising and the capabilities of the Colony have been vastly overrated . . . in the event of my not being able to find good land I cannot see that we shall be doing any good in the Colony and shall strongly recommend you if you charter a vessel to secure the privilege of taking her on to Van Diemen's Land or Sydney. . . . You will I have no doubt see the full propriety of this unless I can get a tract of Land fit for our purpose to the Southward where a new River has been discovered.¹ On seeing the land within thirty or forty miles of this place you will I have no doubt not hesitate a moment about leaving the place; although it would be attended with a considerable sacrifice of property. I am merely however advancing this opinion on the supposition of not finding land to the Southward.

In two other ways the prospects seemed good—whaling and general trade. Whales abounded near the coast and a whale fishery was about to be formed by Mr. Lord of Van Diemen's Land and others; it would be excellent if his father could bring out a couple of whale boats and fishing gear. But apart from things of special or obvious use he begged his father would not invest too much money in property to be brought from England; cash here was better than anything and would enable immediate advantage to be taken of opportunities as they occurred. From what he could see, he was confident that he could do a great deal of good in the way of trade, had he the time and the means to go on with it:

My plan is not to lay out a shilling unless I can do so to sell again with advantage. Let me beg of you not to invest too much: if you speculate I think Rum a good article, and also Feather edge deals, a Box or two of good Segars (that is a large case), boats are in great demand, as also powder and shot and Slops—Luxuries will not answer, few people have money and they lay it out only as necessity compels them.

¹ The Murray River, discovered by Preston and Collie in Oct. 1829.

Despite the uncertainty of the outlook, before ending his first letter he was able to assure his father that

we are all very well and happy together though we did not overrate the difficulties and privations which we should have to put up with.

Still better was the statement

I have no regrets for having left England and I hope when you are all out to be quite settled and happy. Give my kindest love to my Mother and tell her that Mrs. Leake a woman 70 years old arrived in the Atwick quite well.

LOOKING FOR LAND

BUT the crux of the matter was land. While waiting for the southern discoveries it was imperative to get out of the Fremantle sand, to go where there was pasture for his animals and soil that would produce at least vegetables for the people under his care. If he were to get even a small river grant—and no other was any use—there was no time to lose. From home it had looked as if it would be possible to accommodate all England's superfluous population in this boundless and empty land; on the spot, it was obvious that a few hundred people were more than the colony could comfortably hold. James told his family that they

would be surprised to find that a quantity of land is already located; almost every officer both of the Army and Navy stationed here and the Government Clerks etc. have Grants generally from 1000 to 5000 acres. The *Lotus*, *Caroline* and *Atwick* having arrived it has increased the number of claimants astoundingly, indeed faster than the Surveyor-General can survey a Map.

James was right. Much of the land had been given away to officers of the *Challenger* as a reward for services in the strenuous first weeks of the settlement; Captain Dance, of the *Sulphur*, and his officers had received grants, some, like Lieut. Preston and Surgeon Collie, for valuable explorations; grants had been made also to Stirling's ill- or unpaid civil officers—Currie, the Harbour Master; Roe, the Surveyor-General; Peter Brown, the Colonial Secretary, and others, and also to their wives.¹ Stirling himself had taken a small grant on the Swan, part of the 100,000 acres allowed him in lieu of salary by a Colonial Office as yet unpersuaded of the necessity of giving him an income as well.²

¹ Return of Lands assigned up to 30 June 1837; *Ogle*, Appendix XIV.

² *Stirling*, 2.4.31: 'Of my own affairs I can say little that is agreeable to myself. The Colonial Office now seems to consider my part of the land as sufficient pay.' A statement to this effect had lately reached him from Horace Twiss, until recently Under-Secretary for the Colonies; in an unofficial letter Twiss had expressed the 'fear that with every disposition to value your services, it will not be in the power of Government to make you any pecuniary allowance, in the present reduced state

And then, before Stirling and his Surveyor-General were ready for them, settlers, infected by England's 'Swan River Mania', began to flow into the colony. Nobody was more anxious to get them on to their land than the harassed Governor himself. Not long before the *Caroline's* arrival he wrote to his brother that in expectation of a great increase in numbers he had made arrangements for opening

some portion of the country for cultivation shortly. . . . Today an expedition under the command of Preston is to set out for the interior beyond the mountains and are not to return for a fortnight. I purpose shortly to send the *Sulphur* to Geographe Bay to establish a port there and I hope before the end of the summer to have a considerable population in that quarter.¹

James was alert to investigate any promising chance that offered. Within three weeks of his arrival one large area became available for 'location', as permitted settling was called: this was a tract of 250,000 acres on the Canning, the river that flowed into the Swan a few miles below Perth. It had been marked off in London on the Colonial Office map as granted to one Thomas Peel in return for his undertaking to land four hundred families in the colony by 1 November 1829.² Within three or four days of that date, with no sign of Peel's ships in the offing, the Governor led a large party, including James and Camfield, to examine the area, exploring the Canning to its source. James made forty miles of the journey in the *Caroline's* jollyboat, landing at intervals to plunge through the bush with the others, headed by the Governor at his apparently normal breakneck pace. Except for a few narrow strips of alluvial soil, said James, hardly anywhere were they gratified with the sight of good land. Nevertheless, when Peel failed to arrive and his land was thrown open, James applied for 3,000

of the public finances—I am afraid that the only answer to your representations will be, that, in lieu of salary, you received a large and specially circumstanced allotment of Land, which it was understood, would be your only remuneration until the Colony should yield a revenue capable of affording some allowance to its Governor. . . '. But Government relented: Stirling was soon to learn that he had been granted £800 a year, and that it was to be paid as from 1 June 1829, the date of his disembarkation at the Swan (*W.A. Arch.* See also Malcolm Uren, *Land Looking West*, pp. 238-40).

¹ *Stirling*, 7.9.29.

² Peel's transactions with the Colonial Office are given in *III H.R.A.*, vol. vi.

or 4,000 acres on the Canning's banks between one of the rapids and the place where the exploring party had encamped for the night.¹ Camfield and other *Caroline* passengers also applied, Camfield in his urgency naming five different selections: but all were told that their particular choice had been allotted to other claimants—of them all, only Alfred Stone received a grant, but not the one he wished. James admitted to his father that he was rather glad his own application had been refused.

He tried again. On the day of the Guy Fawkes bonfire, while his men revelled in freedom to swing their axes without fear of duke's agent or indignant squire, he appealed to the Governor, this time for a grant on the Swan. The *Caroline* was about to sail; James was up to his eyes completing the business of his charter and involved in disagreeable arguments with Captain Fewson over final accounts;² in addition, he was preparing to go exploring next week to the south: but he could wait for land no longer—his ewes were lambing and were suffering from want of proper food. He therefore asked for a small homestead grant on the Swan so that he could send his people and his hungry stock up the river at once, and could plant vegetables before the season was too late. Stirling was reluctant to let James go to the remote reaches above Perth, unsuited, he said, to sheep or cattle, and proposed to give him instead an available grant on the more accessible Canning, which would place him between Fremantle and Perth. But James had his own ideas and the habit of sticking to them; his Canning choice had fallen to somebody else—he now wanted 2,000 acres on the Swan. Stirling gave in.³ Writing home from Fremantle James said

I have per favour obtained a grant of about 2000 acres . . . part of a Government reserve . . . about 3 miles above Perth the Capital and 15 from this place. The land is fair generally speaking, comprehending some good and some bad. I propose forwarding the stock there with all expedition . . . had I not purchased a little artificial food they would starve.

The grant was next to one given to Henry Camfield in the same accommodating way. In Camfield's first letter home the lack of land, the impossibility of getting started, had over-

¹ *Camfield*, 6.11.29, and *W.A. Arch.*

² *W.A. Arch.*

³ *Ibid.*

shadowed his comments on the climate, the flowers, the natives, and his avowed liking for hard work. But by the middle of November, a landowner at last, he could write cheerfully enough, though the mosquitoes 'gnawed' him and the thermometer in his Fremantle tent stood at 110°. His land, like Henty's, he said, was light sandy soil at the back, but covered along the river edge with luxuriant waist-high crops of grasses and vetch. It was high time something was in the ground—not a single potato had been planted and it was now too late for any grain but maize.

Neither man could move to his grant until he had built a flat-bottomed boat. These were indispensable for settlers above Perth, for nobody could be hired to carry goods farther than the capital and only a 'flat' could get over the shoals that lay beyond. James was able to provide his carpenter with deals brought from home—they were very convenient for the purpose, he said, and everybody was coveting them; Camfield, by allowing his man to build a boat for another settler, was provided with enough boards for two.

A large flat-bottomed boat, capable of either sailing or pulling, as well as several whale boats and a large supply of oars, canvas, and anchors, led the miscellaneous list of requirements that James jotted down just as they occurred to him; he wrote hurriedly, the *Atwick* being about to sail. Despite his haste, he kept in mind always what would sell if not wanted for their own use: cheeses, butter, treacle, and porter; pigs and guinea-fowls; rabbits—only one of his seventeen had survived the voyage; some terrier dogs to catch the abounding rats; mustard and pepper, essential and not to be forgotten; peach, plum, and nectarine stones and apple pips—'we want fruit very much'; half boots and highlows; lanterns and lamps, wax candles from the Cape (a reminder that they could not be brought successfully through the tropics); crockery, glass, 'and all the concomitants of an English Dining Table'. Again he emphasized the advantages of engaging in trade:

I hope you will bear in mind that it will be a matter of very great consequence that one of the boys or myself should settle down at the town as a merchant, a great deal of good may be done, probably quite as much as in Agricultural pursuits—the two blended will however answer best.

That first summer no letter from Fremantle could fail to mention mosquitoes, as much of an affliction as the sand. James said he was bitten on the face and hands and all over, as was everybody else:

The irritation is so great that it is impossible to help rubbing. The skin comes off and bad ulcers are formed arising from eating nothing but salt provisions. The Governor has been laid up some time in consequence.

But all drawbacks notwithstanding,

The more I see of the Colony the more am I disposed to think it will ultimately succeed; first impressions here are decidedly unfavourable but the country improves on closer inspection. Some of the land on the Swan is really beautiful and I have little doubt that good land will be found to some extent, probably beyond the mountains, before long. The new river to the south is at present known very little of. The Governor has named it Murray River. . . . If the land proves good and a desirable situation of some extent can be met with I shall probably take the large grant there. We expect more discoveries to the South during the Summer.

It was to look at this new river, discovered by Preston and Collie, that James intended to go to the south as soon as the *Caroline* sailed. Camfield told his family that James was to be gone ten days or so; if he saw good land where he expected to find it, he was to take his things by water to Cockburn Sound and thence by land carriage. If James carried out this plan he left no record of the journey. Before making his selection he was very anxious to get as far as Port Leschenault, ninety miles to the south. Early in the year a party of three made a brief visit there¹ and returned delighted with what they had seen; Stirling, however, advised against venturing along a difficult coast while the westerlies still prevailed, and James, who was to explore there with a party led by the Governor, had to wait his chance until March.

Soon after his arrival in the west, James had been given a permit for 25,000 acres 'on account'; preoccupied with the difficulties of disembarking the *Caroline*, it was impossible for him at that stage to make out the complete list of his property

¹ In *Letters from Swan River*, 19.1.29, anon.; Stirling to Dance, 23.10.29 (*W.A. Arch.*).

on which the authorities would decide the full amount of his grant. It was very good-natured of the Governor to allow this, said James, as it gave him priority over others in the same ship. He explained to his father that grants were made by a Board of Council and Audit consisting of two individuals, Captain Stirling's cousin, William Stirling, and Captain Currie:

They give you a form which you are required to fill up, specifying the nature of the property you intend to claim land for, to which you are sworn, and you are then required to send in your invoices, and they allow whatever they think proper upon them; upon cattle they allow rather a liberal scale, but on the generality of property they cut it down below the actual cost of the invoices . . . no luxuries are admitted in the scale, and you must bind yourself not to sell any part of the property on which you claim land for three years. I shall therefore, take care to claim only on such articles as I do not intend to sell.¹

When Christmas was approaching, James, except for his Fremantle blocks and the small Swan grant, like most other settlers was still without land.

¹ Stock and property imported by James Henty on which land was claimed, and granted or refused (*III H.R.A.*, vol. vi, p. 639).

THE GOVERNMENT OFFICERS AND A RISING MAN

THE year 1829, that so many had expected would bring them a prosperous new life, was drawing to a close in a hum of gossip and grumble from the dispirited majority, still encamped close to the beach. Not all had been prepared to earn prosperity: too many thought to have ease bestowed upon them. The Governor found that

People came out expecting the Garden of Eden, and some of the working classes were astonished at finding hard work an indispensable preliminary to meat and drink. They said that subsistence could be got in England upon those terms, and that if they had known better they would have remained there.¹

Nor, indeed, were the capitalists all of the right stuff; James told a Worthing friend that many of the fortune seekers were superficial enough to be turned back by the mere sight of Fremantle sand. Far too few of them had any knowledge of the land; most were of other callings, men caught by England's hard times and the prevailing craze for Swan River. Even among those who were genuine agriculturalists, none had been able to foresee the privations they would have to suffer as first settlers in an unknown land. James himself, experienced as he was and sturdy of spirit, admitted to a friend that it was only since he had been in Western Australia that he had been 'taught to think little of difficulties and less of Comforts'.

For the false picture that had lured them across the world, the dismayed settlers blamed the New South Wales botanist; if they could have laid hands on Fraser he would have fared ill. Fraser, however, was safe in Sydney, while the man who was infinitely more responsible, Captain Stirling, moved about among them day by day, and, far from being an object of resentment, grew more and more popular as time went by. He still believed in the future of the colony and worked

¹ *Stirling*, 2.4.31.

unsparingly to ensure its success. James described him as a clever, prudent, and most scrupulous man: his problems called for all these qualities. Sent from England without a charter, without any legal provision for legislative, judicial, or financial institutions for the colony, he had been told that in the meantime he was expected to overcome all difficulties by his own firmness and discretion; in fact, he must somehow just manage.¹ To use Stirling's own words, the burden proved too heavy for one pair of shoulders. At Swan River, waiting month after month for his charter, he found the lack of authority and instructions extremely embarrassing; at length, as he said, necessity forced him to become a ruler in earnest.² In November James had written that the settlement was quite in a lawless state, having not even a constable; next month Stirling announced the appointment of certain persons as justices of the peace, having jurisdiction throughout the whole of the colony.³ Two of those appointed for Perth were Alfred Stone and Mackie, of the *Caroline*; for Fremantle, Mr. George Leake, the merchant, son of the old lady who had crossed the world unharmed, was one of the two appointed, and James Henty was the other. As magistrates they received no pay, though Mackie, as Chairman of Quarter Sessions, was given a salary of £200 a year; but, wrote James,

The office carries with it here as in England a certain degree of weight and respectability and it gives me more influence among our own men which is most desirable as indentured servants throughout the Colony have manifested a turbulence and dissatisfaction by no means agreeable but with an efficient Magistracy will probably be soon done away. The colony being without a Charter a greater degree of responsibility attaches to the Governor and he of course was desirous to relieve himself from as much of it as possible, hence the appointment of Magistrates.

James's weight and respectability were recognized in another way:

The Governor has behaved in the handsomest manner to me on all occasions. I hardly ever go to Perth without being asked to dine

¹ Secretary of State Sir George Murray's *Instructions to Captain Stirling as Lieutenant Governor*, 28.12.28 (*III H.R.A.*, vol. vi, pp. 600-2).

² *Stirling*, 4.3.31.

³ Government Notice, 9.12.29 (*W.A. Arch.*).



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16. ADMIRAL SIR JAMES STIRLING

Painted in England, 1833, by an artist unknown



By courtesy of the Trustees, Mitchell Library

17. ELLEN MANGLES, WIFE OF SIR JAMES STIRLING

with him and he has expressed himself in such terms to other people as to induce me to think that he considers our concern the most respectable in the Colony and I believe he honestly wishes it may thrive. I am on excellent terms with all the Government Officers which I hope to keep up; it will, I am convinced, be of ultimate if not present benefit to us.

Camfeld, who also received 'the greatest kindness' from the government officers, wrote that Henty was in great favour with the Governor and in fact a rising man.

Stirling now had his magistrates to help him as well as the commandant of the troops, the colonial secretary, the surveyor-general, the harbour master, the colonial surgeon, the superintendent of agriculture, and the keeper of the government stores: in the first months, to share with him the colony's purely human problems, a wise *padré* might have been of infinite use. There had been no chaplain in the government transport, *Parmelia*, or in H.M.S. *Sulphur*, and the lack of a clergyman of any denomination in the settlement had been noted with astonishment by more than one.¹ The Secretary of State had impressed upon Stirling the need for reserving land for churches and schools and had instructed him to 'commend, by precept and practice, the habitual observance of Sunday as a day of rest and public worship, as far as circumstances would allow'. A chaplain had, indeed, been appointed in the beginning but did not arrive in the settlement until it was eight months old. For six of those months public worship consisted of Captain Irwin's weekly reading of prayers to the troops and anyone else living near enough who wished to attend:² then, early in December, shipwreck unexpectedly supplied Swan River with a regular ministrant of the Church. Stirling's old ship, *Success*, back in Australian waters, had been cruising for a time on the New South Wales and New Zealand coasts. In October she left Sydney for India, carrying as a passenger the Rev. Thomas Hobbes Scott, until recently Archdeacon of New South Wales in the see of Calcutta. His residence as archdeacon was his second period of service in Australia, for as a layman, newly graduated from Oxford at thirty years of age, he had come to Sydney as secretary and deputy-commissioner to Bigge during

¹ T. B. Wilson, R.N., *Narrative of a Voyage Round the World*, p. 189.

² *Ibid.*

Bigge's inquiry into the administration of Governor Macquarie in New South Wales. On Scott's return to England in 1822 he had taken holy orders and was appointed rector to the parish of Whitfield in the north. An able and active man, informed as to colonial conditions and now an officer of the Church, he must have seemed to the authorities in England the very person to consult in drawing up a plan to provide for Australian churches and schools; Scott's report, with plans for colonial education from primary schools to a future university, was followed by his appointment as first archdeacon to the colony where, only a few years earlier, he had been regarded as an inquisitor second only to Commissioner Bigge. It was not the best background, nor was his outlook the most appropriate, for a healer of souls. His term of office was stormy and finally he resigned; as soon as his successor, Broughton, arrived and had been ceremoniously met and installed, Scott sold his furniture and books and carriage-horses and embarked in H.M.S. *Success* to return to England via Swan River and Madras.¹ He must have felt curious to see the settlement of which Sydney as yet knew nothing beyond the excited anticipations of the English press; curious, too, to see what the enthusiastic Stirling had made of the paradise that the archdeacon had surely heard him extol in 1827. Scott sailed from Sydney in October 1829, just too soon to know that the settlement's abandonment was already rumoured, or to hear—what would have had special interest for him as one-time host to Captain Dumont d'Urville—that the English had nowhere encountered the French.

Scott was to be long enough in the Swan Settlement to more than satisfy any curiosity he may have felt. As the *Success* essayed the passage into the Sound, she struck a reef and so severely damaged her hull that she could not resume her journey for fourteen months. Whatever Scott's shortcomings may have been as a spiritual guide, he was active in the formal functions of his calling and, in the absence of an official chaplain, very useful to Stirling in initiating the work of the Church.² Services conducted by him in the Governor's house at Perth,

¹ *Serle; Sydney Gazette*, various references, 1829, July onwards. Scott's letters written from Perth to the Macarthur family are now in the Mitchell Library (*Macarthur Papers*, vol. lix). Unfortunately the one with his first account of Swan River Settlement is lost.

² Burton's *Wollaston*, 5a; *III H.R.A.*, vol. vi, p. 616.

and at Fremantle, were followed by one on Christmas Day held in Swan River's first church, erected at Perth at Scott's own instigation by men of the 63rd Regiment in less than three weeks. It was built of rushes; rushes filled the wood frames of the pulpit and pews and seats and thatched the roof. Stirling called it 'a decent place of worship'; it lasted for seven years, later acting as school-house on week-days, court-house on Saturdays, and on Sundays as the House of God.

Church-going was so much a part of the pattern of the Hentys' lives that it is hard to believe that James at least was not present at the Fremantle service on 20 December and that the mid-summer Christmas congregation of ninety in the Perth church did not include him and the two younger boys besides. For Swan River it was a great occasion; heat notwithstanding, the Governor appeared in full uniform for the first time: but it was a gathering of people with anxious hearts and poignant memories of other Christmas services in ancient churches overseas. Perhaps only the archdeacon, satisfied in his achievement and eventually homeward-bound, was free from the pangs of homesickness as the familiar hymns rose to the rushes not very high above the singers' heads.

SPADE-WORK

IT was not only the intending settlers who, while still in England, believed or persuaded themselves that they were fully prepared and qualified for the tasks that lay ahead: the officers appointed to the settlement were, in all good faith, self-deluded in the same way. As was soon proved, it was impossible for anyone to envisage the type and magnitude of the difficulties that would be met. Like Stirling, Captain Currie and Mr. Roe had been in Australia in the course of their naval service, but they were without experience in administration of a colony, not to speak of creating a colony from scratch. Roe, for instance, had proved his skill as a survey officer, both on the Australian coasts and in afterwards preparing maps at the Admiralty; work in the cutter *Mermaid* with Captain P. P. King or at a London drawing-board in the Hydrographers' Department had fitted him to make what James called a masterly chart of the dangerous approaches to Swan River, but it was little preparation for the peculiar labour that had to be carried out at high speed in the attempt to satisfy a throng of settlers clamouring for immediate possession of their land. With his one or two assistants, he did his admirable best; but in the circumstances it is small wonder that certain settlers on the right bank of the Swan found later that their land grants extended backwards into the Indian Ocean; still less surprising that in the case of a few of the earliest grants there was apparently no time to make any map record at all.¹ James's undoubted occupancy of the Swan grant next to Camfield's is one of those without proof except in contemporary letters, official and private. He appears to have relinquished the grant almost at once for one seven miles higher up the river, named by him Stoke Farm, and equally unrecorded on early survey maps. Here Stephen lived, while James, except for visits there, remained at Fremantle, occupied with his magistrate's duties, in looking after the interests of the family and of his men, trading

¹ *III H.R.A.*, vol. vi, p. 616.

as much as he had time for, and waiting his chance to go to the south. John apparently divided his time between Fremantle and the farm.

Camfield, established on his grant early in the New Year (1830), no longer had the brothers as his immediate neighbours but saw them at intervals and mentioned them often in his letters home. Henty, he tells his family, 'has behaved most handsomely to me. I cannot say too much of his kindness to me, but I cannot expect he can assist me farther than advice goes.' He needed all James's kindness, for he was finding life hard. He spent his days, as Stephen and John were doing, and all the others along the river banks, grappling with the strange conditions of the new life and learning by bitter experience how different it was from the old. The Hentys had named their farm after the Sussex river Stoke; Camfield linked past and present by calling his grant, with its wattle and daub dwelling, Burrswood, after his Kentish home. His days were spent in unremitting toil; 'distinctions between master and man here are little', he wrote; 'we are all very dirty and very brown'. As soon as the rains should fall, he intended to get to work with his spade to break up the ground for wheat; it was now so dry and hard that even those who had ploughs had not attempted to use them. Camfield had brought a plough from England, but perhaps had already parted with it for money or food. The Hentys had a plough and could afford to keep it and, when their hunger-driven cattle strayed into the bush and were irrecoverably lost, to buy from Mr. Gellibrand of Van Diemen's Land a new plough team of five bullocks at £21 each: but they could not force the baked unwilling earth to submit to the plough, or to accept seed, until the rain fell. Three times that first summer the settlers planted after a little rain, watched in hope, and three times saw the sprouting crops die. A letter from Camfield, written from Fremantle while visiting James, is typical of the low spirits induced in most of the settlers by this misfortune and the deficiency of fresh food.

We have not a cabbage, blade of wheat, of Indian corn or potatoes, in fact we have come out at the wrong season of the year, what the next shall produce, God only knows . . . our provisions of course are daily wasting, what we are to do when they are gone I know not.

Moreover, the hungry colony had been called upon to provision H.M.S. *Cruizer*, down from India, and a large ship, the *Nancy*, that had arrived from England with only three barrels of pork to carry her to Van Diemen's Land. The *Parmelia*, chartered by the Governor to fetch stock and supplies from Java, had taken three weeks to go and seven to return. The heavy cost of her long voyage had added enormously to the price of the goods that she brought. Sugar was 10*d.* a pound instead of 2½*d.*; rice, that should have been less than 1*d.* a pound, was three times as much; bread was 7½*d.* a pound, pork £6 a cask, and beef £10. Camfield felt that

Those who have an income of from 1 to 200 a year for the next four or five years, provided the seasons shall be propitious, may make it answer well but those who have nothing coming in must fail. . . . I would advise no one to come out till two or three years, when we may send better accounts.

Most of the settlement would have echoed this advice: James, with more money than Camfield, with Fremantle's more varied diet and blessed with a more robust spirit, held a different view. His first letter of the New Year, a double foolscap sheet closely crossed, travelled home in a Littlehampton ship, the *Norfolk*, bound for England via Madras.

Since my last letter written by the Atwick I think the prospect of the Colony improved and that time only is wanting to ensure a certain degree of success. That we shall succeed better than any other British Colony I very much doubt, but I hope with good management and perseverance it will in the end turn out a good thing. At present we are quite at a loss for any quantity of good land. I have sent the people and the stock on our grant on the Swan which tho' none of the best of land is sufficient for our present purpose, that of keeping the stock alive and raising as much of the necessaries of life as possible.

He had some important news: the papers had just come back from the Board of Council and Audit with a letter from the Governor permitting him to take up 84,413 acres of land in any part of the colony open for location:

It unfortunately happens, that no district is open where the land is good. I must therefore wait until further discoveries take place before I can act on it. A great many others are in the same situation

and it makes for a jealousy and dissatisfaction among them; discoveries are made very slowly in consequence of the difficulty of carrying any quantity of provisions.

Meantime, he was building a mud house on the Swan grant, with the thatched roof that, so comfortable in England, here added the dread of fire to a settler's troubles. At present the Hentys and their people were all living in huts and tents and the open air; it agreed with them very well, James said—there had been no illness among them worth speaking of, except slight attacks of scurvy from being without vegetables and eating nothing but salt meat. He felt able to look forward to better days: 'I hope by the time you arrive I shall have things a little comfortable for you. . . . I know you will be happy, if not at once, soon after.'

BETWEEN BROTHERS

JAMES's letters were not all to his father; he wrote to William too. This choice was not, one feels, merely because of uncertainty about the date of departure of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Henty and the others, when William was likely to be the only one left behind, but because James was on very good terms with William, respected his young lawyer brother, and looked to him to curb the impetuosity of their father and what James, as a seasoned colonist, considered Thomas's extravagant ideas. In everything to do with the science of farming James looked on his parent as a wise man; in economical management of their affairs, and especially of their venture to Swan River, he regarded himself as the father of his people and Thomas as an irresponsible youngster to be guarded from mistakes. When William was an elderly man, a grave citizen devoted to cultural pursuits, and was digging in his family's past, he recorded it as a matter for regret that Thomas had spent so much of his youth in the company of militia officers. Whether or not Thomas's lightness of heart could in fact be attributed to the frivolous influence of these young men, who founded Goodwood while training for England's defence,¹ James and William, as to the need for restraining their father's impulses, were evidently at one. 'Don't let Father invest a lot of money in useless property' is a tune often repeated, with variations: 'if much money is laid out by Father on stock we shall never see it again'; no stock should be brought but sheep, nothing that, if not wanted by themselves, would not sell readily in a community where eight-tenths of the people after a few months in the colony were short of provisions and had to save every penny for mere bread. James did not want his father to fall into the error of so many whose luxuries, unusable and unsaleable, lay rotting in the Fremantle sand. His own importations for trading were largely confined to flour and other essential foods, and building materials other than bricks—for bricks, as he said, everyone

¹ *Horse Racing*, pp. 259-60.

could make for themselves when they were wanted: but he does seem to have included rum under the heading of mere bread. He tells William that flour, slop clothing, and rum will always sell, and that if he had brought rum out with him to the extent of 20 puncheons he could have sold it at a profit of a full 150 per cent.

After less than four months in the colony, James felt at home; he had even developed a strong local pride.

I begin now to have the manners and thinking of a Colonist. It is astonishing how natural Western Australia appears to me now and still more astonishing that habit even in so short a time should reconcile us to this distant part of the Globe. We Colonists look upon ourselves as very superior to any person coming either from Van Diemen's Land or New South Wales and are not desirous of having much communication with them. Almost everything we want can be supplied us from the Cape and at a less price than by the other Colonies.

Among other colonial arts, he was beginning to understand how to hunt the kangaroo; to James this was of prime importance and not just an enjoyable sport, for his people had long since eaten all the meat brought from England, originally calculated to last a much greater time. The secret of successful hunting was the possession of swift and powerful dogs. He had already asked his father to bring out a brace of large staghounds to breed from, so great was their value at the Swan:

I gave £14 for one the other day for Mr. Preston of H.M.S. *Sulphur* and we killed three [kangaroos] in three days last week. I dare say there has not been a dozen killed in the Colony, so difficult are they to get at for want of proper dogs.

Stephen, using two dogs, had added two kangaroos to the larder, one a buck weighing 86 pounds after skinning and cleaning; eight more had been got by Preston and James. 'They are very good eating but have little or no fat except on the tail, which makes excellent soup'. The need to watch for chances to buy provisions for his people tied him to Fremantle more continuously than had been planned; while there, following his instinct for commerce, he bought and sold everything that could be got, aiming always at a quick turn-over in order to give him a fund of ready cash. His fellow magistrate and

merchant-rival, George Leake—a man he did not ‘altogether like’—with £2,000 in ready money was doing very well owing to the ‘really wonderful improvidence’ of many settlers in arriving with much property and little food; but though, said James, a great deal more money was to be made in this way than by farming, he still thought the two combined was the best. Moreover, he felt it his duty to do all he could to contribute to the prevention of starvation. Where possible he exchanged his few luxuries for beef and flour; but he was to find that except by such barter and by importation no contribution to food supplies was to be possible until after the winter rains.

Writing freely to William, he ranged over the possibilities of the mercantile field, local and overseas. There was abundant fish—if they had proper lines and hooks and if they knew how to catch them; they could start a dried fish trade with Java, Timor, the Isle of France, and the Cape, as well as with the other Australian colonies—if they could afford to buy a small schooner: if they had that schooner, they could hunt sperm whale. There was small prospect of realizing their hopes of selling horses in India and Lord Charles Somerset had already established a good breed at the Cape;¹ James was therefore sorry he had brought out the stallion Sir John, not worth a quarter of the money here that he would have been in England. Banking would ‘answer’; he was disposed to think it very desirable that his father should come out prepared to enter into a banking concern, and it would be a good plan to have a copper plate struck off at once for ones, fives, and tens. There was already talk of a joint stock bank under government sanction; James thought this premature but was ready to take shares if the plan went on. Doubtless with the Henty–Olliver bank and its branches in mind, he thought it possible he might get the office of managing director, with a salary. William, he considered, could not do better than remain in England to finish his training and then possibly come out to Western Australia in some official capacity; Mackie, Chairman of Quarter Sessions, was not likely to hold his appointment long, as the Home

¹ Somerset, the last of Cape Colony’s autocratic governors, had so successfully improved the colonial breed of horses that a good trade had developed in their export to India and Mauritius. Towards the end of Somerset’s stormy term of office (1814–26) he was replaced by Sir Richard Bourke, soon to be Governor of New South Wales.

Government would probably send out their own man—it might be worth William's while to make inquiries. One or two stipendiary magistrates might be sent out at £400 or £500 a year; that was another possibility for William. Or, should the colony succeed, William might get an excellent business as a conveyancer, or become Crown Law Officer or Attorney-General. Charles might get the appointment of Treasurer to the Colony, a most responsible and handsomely paid position. Other posts to be created would be commissioners of the Land Board, registrars, collectors of customs, and several other officers, and James saw no reason why he and his brothers were not to apply for some of them; in fact, he told William, he would not be satisfied unless one or other of the family received a civil appointment.

All this showed unbounded confidence in the future of the colony and in the fitness of the Henty brothers to help the colony to achieve success, and later developments were to show that James's faith in his clan was justified; but, convinced as he was of Henty quality, he knew his world and his day: their claims must be brought to the right notice and by the right people. Interest, he said, was the thing; the interest of Lord Egremont (his county's lord lieutenant) or of Sir Charles Burrell (his borough's M.P.) would be enough to procure one of the offices.

Meantime, James was an unpaid magistrate, and as such a good deal concerned with the disastrous affairs of Mr. Thomas Peel.¹ He gave some indignant details to William, who, like every other Englishman who read his papers and enjoyed the squibs and cartoons of the day, knew of Peel as one of the syndicate of speculators who had first inclined the Government to accept Stirling's plan for settlement of the west, and who, as a cousin of the Prime Minister and because of the grandiose scale of his plans, had become the centre of a popular storm. Peel's imagination, like that of poorer men, had been fired by Stirling's description of the fertility of the Swan; like others, he cancelled a plan to emigrate to New South Wales expecting that in the new colony his fortune would be made, not merely from European fruits and grains but from tobacco, cotton, sugar, and flax. The settlers he induced to go with him were promised their due proportion of Paradise and flocked to partake in the

¹ See Uren, chap. xvii, *The Peel Settlement Tragedy*.

plan. James and Camfield, it may be remembered, had been among those who had examined the grant on the Canning River reserved for Peel until a fixed date. Peel, by his late arrival with his first party, had forfeited the grant; his people were now, said James, encamped on a wretched block near Woodman's Point, south of Fremantle, waiting in miserable immobility for their leader to keep his word.

Peel's manner of treating the people that have come out with him is really too bad and great dissatisfaction prevails among them; from the gentlemen to the labourers he has tied them down in such a manner that they cannot escape him without sacrificing a great deal of their property.

Peel, like another large speculator, Colonel Lautour, had made the fatal error of landing his people without arranging for proper supplies of provisions and money to be available when they should arrive. Colonel Lautour, late of the 11th Dragoons and a veteran of the Peninsula and Waterloo, had been recruiting settlers in Brighton and preparing a vessel for them at the time when the *Caroline* was being got ready for sea;¹ an earlier vessel, the *Calista*, had taken out his first party on that ill-organized voyage of which James had written from Rio.

In Western Australia his concern, managed for him by agents, James feared was a bad one and likely to come to an end; in that case the Governor would release the men from their indentures.² Peel's men, he told William, had nearly all paid their own passages, and

many had deposited money in his hands to receive cattle at *fixed* prices on their arrival here. Cattle can now be bought 50 and 75 per cent cheaper than he has agreed to supply them for. . . . He agrees with his men by Indentures (many of which in the capacity of Magistrate I have seen) to pay them from three to five shillings a day and they are to find themselves and he is bound to settle with them every calendar month. In the meantime they draw provisions from him at certain rates. The principal part of the men have applied for a settlement of the balance due to them. The Storekeeper, Mr.

¹ *Brighton Gazette*, 7.5.29.

² Lautour's disaster was on a smaller scale than Peel's. His agents were Richard Wells and occasionally W. G. Sams, later of V.D.L. (*W.A. Arch.*). Lautour became bankrupt in England in 1830, and in 1839 his confused financial affairs and 'dis-
ingenuous dealings' were the subject of a legal inquiry, detailed in the *Laun. Adv.*, because of Lautour's interests in V.D.L.

Emslie,¹ told me yesterday Peel had no money to pay them but purposed to pay them a Note, a printed form of which he showed me. Now, I think the men can object to receive these notes and if so Mr. Peel will be obliged to break his engagement and all his labourers will be open to employment by the public and such is the feeling towards Peel by the men that if once they find a loophole away they go, for he is detested among them for his violent temper. . . . He is looked at here very suspiciously.

A few days later, James reported to his father that, 'knowing the Governor's opinion', he had refused to allow Peel to put his notes into circulation; he believed Peel meant to try it, notwithstanding, and his people now had James's consent to leave him.

In the first weeks of his magisterial responsibilities James evidently thought with longing of that classic manual of the law, the book that had absorbed so many of Talbot's days in the *Caroline*—Burn's *Justice of the Peace*; he wrote home that the English system was to be copied in the settlement and asked that Burn's volumes should be sent out. Thanks to William's prescience, James did not have to wait for guidance for eleven months: early in February, only a few days after his request was made, he 'got possession' of letters and papers that had arrived by the *Wanstead* a fortnight since, and there, an answer to his prayer, he found a parcel of law books dispatched to him by William long months before. Since August, the *Wanstead* had been moving over the oceans, to Bahia and then to the Cape of Good Hope; no wonder there was anxiety for her safety among people, such as Colonel Lautour's settlers, who awaited provisions by her. James, too, was expecting goods, among other things his fishing nets, badly needed to provide the men with fresh food. On board, also, was the settlement's long-awaited chaplain, the widowed Mr. Wittenoom, with his sister and his three sons. Thankfully acknowledging the books, James said

We are unfortunately too full of law business. Thieving, quarrelling and breaking agreements are the principal points we have to decide on. Without clerks my office as magistrate is anything but a pleasant one. We hope soon to get more regular and with the assistance of the books I shall feel myself more fit for the situation.

¹ Adam W. Elmslie, a settler, arrived in the *Gilmore* with Peel, 15.12.29.

Those letters by the *Wanstead* were the first written from England to the *Caroline* settlers; Camfield, writing on 1 February, says he has that moment read his brother's letter of the 28th of June. The *Minstrel* leaving England in September and bringing more recent letters, had arrived a fortnight before; they were the first to reach the Hentys and their men. 'I assure you', James told William, 'that I don't know if ever I enjoyed more real pleasure than in reading the letters by the *Minstrell*.' His pleasure gave warmth to his own letters: at last, he and his family were again in touch.

Even with this additional warmth, James's letters did not display the imaginative concern for his home and each occupant that Camfield's did; Camfield poured out affection and visualized, as he wrote, the old life he had shared and that now continued without him in its gentle, gradually diminishing way. He hears the Sunday bells, sees the shrubbery and hop garden, smells the meadow hay, and asks 'on cold mornings, do you still give the old women gin?' 'What a long time Bessie has been in London!' he exclaims. Ann, his married sister, how does she get on? Matilda's health? the prospects of all? 'I want much to know what you are doing', he writes, 'send me long accounts.' It did not occur to James to send his sister fifty kisses or to address her as 'My Own Beloved Maid'; indeed, he never addressed her at all. While Camfield wistfully looked back, James looked firmly forward, planning with undoubted affection for his parents' comfort and each brother's success; his sister, with no professional future, was not a subject for separate plans and was included with his parents as a matter of course.

In these answers to the first letters from home he had a number of things to report about the men. First he acknowledged the opportune arrival by the *Minstrel* of Harry Hersey of Arundel, an indentured blacksmith who seemed 'well disposed'. Other men he required, and that he asked his father to bring out, were, a printer who thoroughly understood his business, together with a small press; a storekeeper clerk; and a good shipwright, William Dyer of West Tarring being well enough for the repairing but not for the building of boats. Goble, a whitesmith, also of West Tarring, he had allowed to set up for himself on the understanding that he was to pay James £30 in money and do all his pen-mending and any other

little job for four years. His men, he told William, 'at present stick too much to the English system to enable them to do much', but he had recently

hired a man from Sydney (not a convict) for a year at £25 and his board, a capital Stock Keeper, shingle splitter, fencer, and knows how to do all the Colonial work. He will be able to teach my men better than I could by other means . . . a capital fellow, well acquainted with the Bush; our men do not understand it.

He advised leaving a brother in England to look after their frequent small affairs better than Lubbock's or any other agent was likely to do; he hoped that if William was the one to remain his father would send Charles, and Edward too—they would both be of infinite service. Frank, just fifteen, should finish his education in England—there was none in Western Australia for 'children'—and go on to London University according to his father's 'judicious plan'.

Of all these projects and aims, fine wool remained the chief. 'Our's is the only true flock in the Colony', wrote James; words that must have delighted his father's heart. Wool, according to Archdeacon Scott, with whom James had had much conversation, was the only thing worth attending to in Australian farming; in New South Wales, those who had planted corn extensively were losing by it—Street, one of these, was now labouring under a depression like the rest. During James's first dispirited weeks in the settlement he must have bitterly regretted that his family had ever been tempted away from New South Wales; now, however, he could draw comfort from recent not always favourable reports of the older colony in the east. Perhaps the conversations with the archdeacon had a good deal to do with James's change of view; Scott was very knowledgeable about New South Wales, had spent many years there, had been everywhere and met everybody. Fresh from a dispute with a number of its leading citizens and a libel case against the editor of the *Monitor*,¹ Scott was unlikely to have drawn an attractive picture of Sydney life. It seems it was not only in private conversation

¹ E. S. Hall (1786–1860), journalist; important as a political reformer in the years of Darling's administration. Scott's action against Hall was one of seven, as a result of which Hall was sentenced by a military jury to imprisonment for a total of three years, receiving a free pardon from Darling after serving a part (*Serle*). Scott acted generously towards Hall in the matter of fines due.

that he praised the new settlement at the expense of the old. James described the occasion of a dinner given to the governor by his magistrates and civil officers on the day of a *levée*; other guests were Captain Irwin of the 63rd and the captains and officers of the war vessels *Sulphur*, *Cruizer*, and the disabled *Success*:

Each of us invited a friend. I took Stephen, who was well pleased with his day. It went off remarkably well. The party consisted of about fifty among whom was Archdeacon Scott who astonished me by saying on the occasion of his returning thanks that he had never during eleven years dined with so respectable a party at Sydney. This speaks volumes as to the state of society there.

Scott's remarks were likely to strengthen the local belief in the superiority of the Swan—a colony without convicts, emancipist problems, or a military caste, a society that, whatever its sufferings, in its origins and standards was in its own view socially above reproach. 'We pride ourselves much on the distinction', said James, and 'endeavour by every possible means to keep it up.'

James still had first-hand experience of only one colony, but he was sure it was the best. The West, he said, was certainly not the country it was represented to be, but its success he thought no longer doubtful: the struggle was worthwhile, notwithstanding the heat of the summer, the flies, fleas, mosquitoes, often bad water, the poor living, and hard work. Listing these plagues, and thinking of his mother who was soon to meet such things for the first time, he must have recalled the well-ordered comfort of the farm:

Everyone of us will be most heartily glad when we are joined by the rest of our family; we feel much at a loss in our domestic concerns in the absence of our dear Mother.

He enjoined his father to

Give my love to my dear Mother and say I hope she will bear up against the difficulties with her usual fortitude. I am convinced in the end it will be a most beneficent thing for all of us if we manage providently.

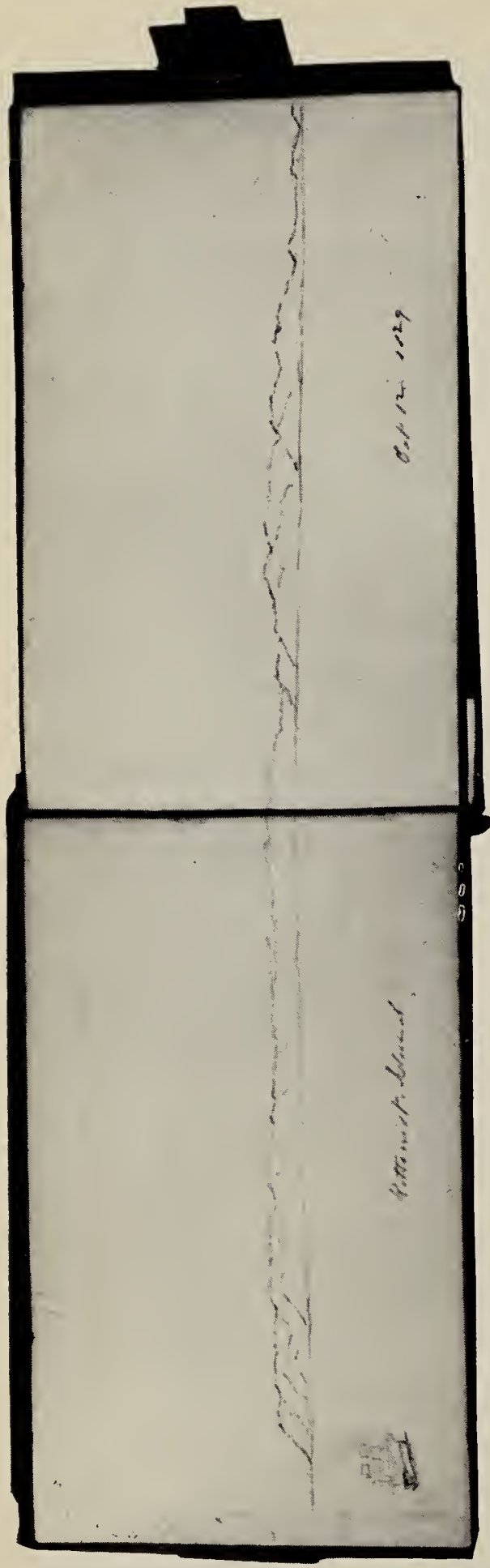
And he assured William

I feel almost convinced that had I known as much of the Colony before I came out as I do now it would not have prevented me from becoming a settler in Western Australia.



18. OPENING OF ST. KATHERINE'S DOCK, 25 OCTOBER 1828, WITH THE SHIPS *ELIZABETH* AND *MARY*
ENTERING THE DOCK
By courtesy of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich

Both the Henty ships, *Caroline* (1829) and *Forth of Alloway* (1831) sailed from this dock
Aquatint by E. Duncan after J. W. Huggins



19. THE CAROLINE OFF ROTTNEST ISLAND, SWAN RIVER, 12 OCTOBER 1829

Inset: The *Orelia* and the *Cumberland*

Sketches by James Henty

EXPEDITION TO THE SOUTHWARD

PRESTON and Collie, that pair of devoted discoverers, had recommended James to apply for land at Leschenault and the Governor had approved the advice; to encourage James there were also the delighted reports of two others who had gone down there to investigate on behalf of Colonel Lautour. Stirling promised him that if the land, when seen, turned out to be less good than was expected, he would make some other arrangement—a promise that could only mean that James would in that case be allowed to wait still longer for still more discoveries to be made. Towards the end of the summer he got his chance to go and see for himself. In the new three-masted schooner, *Eagle*, newly arrived from London with settlers, he set out with a party, full of hope that at the Leschenault he would find what the Swan, the Canning, and the Murray rivers had all failed to provide—good and sufficient land for the exercise of that family skill in fine wool and pedigree horse-flesh that was the basis of all their plans. The schooner left Fremantle on 3 March, called in at Garden Island to pick up provisions from the government stores, and sailed steadily out of the passage with a fair breeze off the land. Undoubtedly everyone on board was thankful for a short absence from the Swan, with its summer afflictions of ophthalmia, dysentery, fleas, and flies, with its perennial talk of the erring botanist, Fraser, and the failure of three successive crops. Stirling himself, handsome, sociable, and still outwardly of unquenchable optimism, was in charge; the others were the Surveyor-General, young Mr. Roe; *Sulphur*'s Scottish surgeon, Dr. Alexander Collie, full of scientific lore and fighting a losing battle against unrecognized, or possibly unacknowledged, tuberculosis; Lieut. Preston, also of the *Sulphur* and praised on all hands as indefatigable and enterprising—a 'superb little fellow', Collie called him; Lieut. Willis of H.M.S. *Cruizer*, down from India; Ensign McLeod with a detachment of the 63rd on its way to form a station in the south; a boat's crew from *Sulphur*; and five or

six men—‘gentlemen volunteers’—including James Henty, all anxious to examine areas soon to be opened up. And, though the official records make no mention of the fact, Mrs. Stirling was on board too. Her good nature, good looks, intelligence, and natural charm, must have added to everyone’s enjoyment of the expedition. Aged twenty-three, a brunette with—to quote a naval observer¹—‘an exceeding nice foot and arm’, she was a happy mixture of sense and simplicity, sweetness and vivacity; moreover, she was ready to rough it with the rest. Comments on her prettiness and friendly manner occur in many letters of the earliest days—letters from the homesick settler on the Canning longing for one English aster, one common convolvulus, in place of all the exotic flowers of the west;² from the anxious newcomer, poor son of the rectory, just landed at Fremantle from the steerage of a hungry ship;³ from the settler’s wife on the Upper Swan, struggling to care for her husband and four children and to maintain something of the graces of their former life and finding comfort in the understanding of a much younger woman: ‘I assure you’, she told her bosom friend, ‘King Wm. and Queen Adelaide are not more loved in England than our Governor and his Lady are here.’⁴ A discerning young woman, Miss Mary Bussell, staying at Perth on her way to the wilds, wrote to an English friend that she was more delighted with Mrs. Stirling every day:

Never was anyone better fitted for her very peculiar situation as it is not the courteous style of a Governor’s wife that is wanted here but the warm hearted interestedness of a friend, and you would not believe the fond affection with which she is greeted.⁵

Henry Camfield called her ‘a paragon of perfection’. It is from James’s letter to his father that we know Mrs. Stirling was on

¹ Lieut. Benjamin Helpman, ex-mate of the survey ship *Beagle*, commander of the colonial schooner, *Champion*; m. Ann, daughter of Captain Walter Pace, of Swan River, formerly in the E.I.C.’s service (*Helpman Journals*, Roy. Geog. Soc. Aust., S.A. Branch, vol. xlv).

² John Okey Davies, arr. *Lotus*, 6.10.29, letter 26.1.32 (*W.A. Arch.*).

³ Edward Powell, arr. *Lotus*, 6.10.29, son of Rev. J. Giles Powell, Vicar of Hillmorton, Warwickshire. In his *Narrative*, Mr. Powell published an account of his son’s experiences, without his son’s name.

⁴ Mrs. William Shaw, wife of Captain William Shaw, late Rifle Brigade, arr. *Egyptian*, 8.2.30, undated letter (? 1830) (*M.L.*).

⁵ Mary Bussell, letter of Aug. 1834 (*W.A. Arch.*).

board: James made no personal comments on the Governor's wife, and Thomas sent most of the letter on for the information of the Colonial Office.¹

They were off Leschenault Inlet at eight next morning, but the wind being fair they sailed on south to Cape Naturaliste on the far tip of the great curve of Geographe Bay. As the *Eagle* sailed along the low coast, with the line of the Darling Range moving gradually to meet the sea at Cape Naturaliste, James's watchful eyes, scanning the edge of this unexplored country, were reminded of his own familiar Sussex. The high land at the Cape abutted into the sea, he said, like the Downs at Brighton; the Range itself he found not unlike the South Downs when viewed from near Guildford at a point below Birtley, John Street's family home. There the likeness ended—the Range was of granite, the Downs of chalk; but the similarity was perhaps enough to incline James in the country's favour, and it may have been James's observation of it that prompted Stirling to call it Sussex a little later, when dividing his territory into districts under distinctive names. Returning from the Cape, they anchored for a while in the limpid waters of Port Vasse, where a crowd of friendly natives walked with them for the greater part of the day on the estuary's sandy shores. James guessed correctly that, if there had been time to explore, a river would have been found flowing into its upper end; but Port Leschenault was their real destination, so they sailed on north.

And now, at last, James set down the cheerful words that his father had been waiting to read ever since the *Caroline* had carried his sons away from England: towards Port Leschenault, he wrote, the hills were covered with good soil, almost every-

¹ *W.A. Arch.*, from *Swan River Papers*, Public Record Office. Mrs. Stirling was Ellen Mangles, daughter of John Mangles of Woodbridge. Family tradition says that Captain Stirling fell in love with her when she was fourteen and he saw her for the first time: she was trying to ride two donkeys at once with one foot on the back of each. He proposed for her when she was fifteen. Mrs. Mangles, reporting the proposal to her brother, General Hughes, describes her daughter as 'juvenile even for her years—that is to say, she prefers riding on horse-back, swinging, driving the donkey-chaise and rowing the boat, to dancing or conversing sentimentally with the Beaux. Indeed, it was but yesterday she said she did not like any gentleman much, but doubtless in that respect her taste will alter!' Ellen, she adds, had a great deal of character, while Captain Stirling was 'unimpeachable for honor and integrity, intelligent mind handsome face and figure' (*Stirling*). Captain Stirling married Ellen Mangles the next year.

where affording good sheep pasture. They were well timbered and partly covered with wild pea and other wholesome plants; two rivers sprang from them, running through rich valleys to the lower lands that, though generally poorer, afforded patches of rich sandy loam: it was a region better calculated for sheep than any he had so far seen. The rivers had already been named the Preston and the Collie; both flowed into a wide estuary lying parallel to the sea and divided from it along its seven miles by steep sandhills and, as James said, was 'picturesque with islands, bays, points and creeks'.

A number of excursions were made into the surrounding country. On the first morning there, James got a seat in the Governor's whaleboat and went with him five miles up the Preston to its farthest navigable point; on the next, the governor proposed a three-day expedition of volunteers to find the source of the Collie, climb the Darling Range, and return across the intervening country. James said that

A party of ten was formed in as many minutes and the following morning at 7 a.m. every man was ready with pack at his back. My load was as follows:—a Gun, Shot belt full, Powder horn ditto, Copper Caps. 3 lbs. Pork 3 lbs. Bread. Tea. Sugar. Bottle of Rum. Ditto Water. Knife. Spoon. Tin Pannikin. Compass. Burning Glass. Towel. Soap. Scotch Cap. Blanket. Pipe & Tobacco. Shooting Jacket & Waistcoat Duck Trousers & Three small cooking kettles were carried alternately by the party. This I assure you is a tremendous load when walking through brushwood in a warm climate. Our party consisted of Lieuts. Preston and Willis, Dr. Collie and myself (rather cronies) Messrs. Lennard, Talbot, Dale 63rd Regt., Surveyor General, Kellam and a sailor.¹

Stirling accompanied them for nine miles, as far as the boats could go; here they 'dined' and here the Governor decided to lay out a town. Then, at 1 p.m., led by Mr. Roe, they started off,

the Governor cordially shaking us by the hand and wishing us a pleasant journey. Some of the party were of a lively turn and off we went merrily at about 4 knots an hour we however soon slackened to $2\frac{1}{2}$ the usual brush-walking pace.

¹ Not mentioned before, E. B. Lennard, son of Sir Thomas Lennard of Essex, arr. 23.8.29 *Marquis of Anglesey*, and John Kellam, *Lotus*, 6.10.29, sent after this expedition as assistant surveyor to a new settlement, Augusta (*W.A. Arch.*).

That evening, on the Range, they camped on the Collie River where it ran about 5 feet wide,

a cool stream, about as much as runs into our Linseed pond. The water was delicious and we drank to our hearts content. The land from the Spot where we started to our place of bivouac was one continued tract of fair upland well calculated for sheep.

Near the Preston River they came to the edge of some level open plains, grassed and thinly scattered with trees; in the map published by Arrowsmith not long afterwards to show the latest discoveries in the south-west parts of Australia, this area was labelled 'Henty's Plains: Extent Unknown'.

All James saw confirmed his wish for land near Leschenault.

The Collie running the whole way through this land has induced me to apply for a Grant of 60,000 acres. I have seen no tract in the country at all to be compared to it. If possible I shall get in a half mile of navigable frontage, and if so shall be within 12 miles of the Town and Harbour. The Governor has taken his own grant about 20 miles to the South and reserved for himself a delightful villa Grant close to the Town for a Summer Residence adjoining which I am to have another. I have also the promise of a Town allotment.

On the *Eagle's* return to the Swan, the excursion was described in a government notice posted outside the Surveyor-General's office, in Perth. Although, said the notice, there had been no very striking discovery, the expedition had added very considerably to previous knowledge of the territory; the general result had

afforded the Lieut. Governor the greatest satisfaction by showing that the industry, enterprise, and intelligence of the settlement need not remain unemployed, for want of materials on which to act.

Stirling commended the district to the notice of settlers, for whose security he had established a military post at the inlet's entrance; he advised an early selection, as there would be no more land opened for location this year and at the end of the year—for the privilege had been extended until the end of 1830—the system of free grants would expire.¹

James was able to send the good news home on the day of the *Eagle's* return, Captain Lilburn, of the *Egyptian*, bound for

¹ W.A. Arch.

Madras, having 'obligingly delayed the sailing of his vessel' in order that despatches and letters might be sent by her. It was expected, said James, that many people would instantly ship themselves for the Leschenault district, and his own formal application would go in next day. He was, however, doubtful how soon it might be possible actually to begin there: perhaps not until the spring.

REPORT TO WORTHING

BY now, people in England had begun to learn from their friends on the Swan something of the truth of the first months of the settlement. Many accounts had travelled back, some from genuine would-be settlers, suitable and otherwise, some from people, honest men as well as fortune hunters, who hoped to make a living out of supplying the wants of the community the settlers would create. The accounts varied in the intensity of their indignation or distress, but the general picture was one to alarm. People like James, who habitually weighed evidence and suspended judgment, must have felt it wise to send home a more dispassionate story than some from too hasty and even libellous pens. Several weeks after returning from Leschenault, James sat down to write an authentic account to somebody at Worthing—somebody who, he thought, had probably heard conflicting tales and was apparently not otherwise informed.¹ The letter begins 'My Dear Sir' and ends 'Yours very faithfully'; obviously not a close friend, it was perhaps to an acquaintance of consequence in the county of Sussex who was likely to share the facts with other interested and influential men. It is a valuable summary, written in May 1830, when James still believed that the West would prove suitable for agricultural and pastoral pursuits. When he wrote, only a fragment of the vast country—only one square mile in a million—had been seen, much less examined, by white men. The varying qualities of the Swan area itself were now known. North of the Swan, the low coast had been found as barren as described by the Dutch and the French; to the south, there seemed promise of good well-watered land. The rocky Darling Range, a seemingly modest enough barrier only a few miles inland, had not yet been crossed, but because on the Sydney side of the continent—also partially sterile along the coastal strip—good land had been found across the Blue Mountains, there was a general belief that the same must prove true here

¹ *W.A. Arch.*, from *Swan River Papers*, P.R.O.

in the west: once across the Range, and all would be well. There were said to be native tales of inland rivers and lakes: Stirling himself had suggested that in 'the Interior' there must be a chain of snow-capped mountains—how else account for the cool wind that blew in winter from the east?¹ James, like others, had no doubt of finding on the other side of the Darlings as fine a country as the Bathurst Plains of New South Wales; and to him, because of the wool-growing achievements of John Street, the name of Bathurst connoted prosperity and success.

The ultimate success of the Swan River Settlement was, he said, dependent on a supply of labour at reasonable rates. The few free 'mechanics' and labourers in the colony were getting so well paid that indentured servants had become dissatisfied; a free carpenter now got 10 shillings a day and a common labourer 5. Though James did not say so, the dissatisfaction was not due solely to contrast in wages; the free man, labourer, or artisan, *was* free, and probably for the first time in his working life. 'It is not here as in England', wrote a free bricklayer to an English friend, 'if you don't like it you may leave it—it is here, pray do stop, I will raise your wages.'² James wanted many more of such free men in the colony, not with any idea of reducing wages but to help in opening up the country. He thought that

By far the best plan would be for the parishes to raise money on the rates to send their surplus poor out as free servants; they are sure of employ and handsome wages and would be of great Service to the Colony generally.

He was evidently not among those settlers who now envied the older penal colonies their forced labour and who urged that the British Government should change its policy and send out convicts to relieve the labour shortage at the Swan; nor did he grudge good pay to those who earned it. On the whole he had been lucky in most of his own indentured servants—carpenter and thatcher, shepherds and farmhands, his Chippers and his Hills, Sandfords, Gobles, Bushbys, and others who, with their families made thirty-three, nearly all from Tarring. Some

¹ In March 1827 Stirling 'observed that the coldest Land Winds were from E.N.E.; and in that direction I expect to learn hereafter that Snowy Mountains are situated' (*III H.R.A.*, vol. vi, p. 567).

² *Perth Gazette*, ? date.

proved unadaptable to colonial ways and one or two he was glad to 'loose', but his relations with them were good, and when they left his employ he helped them to get suitable work and, where they wished it, to become landowners themselves.¹ He seems to have had fewer exasperating experiences than many other settlers, who found themselves saddled with unwilling or worthless servants to be housed, fed, and clothed and paid sometimes as much as £25 a year. 'We wish we had not brought out indentured servants', lamented Mrs. Whatley, a neighbour of the Henty boys at Stoke Farm;

Those who are tied are sure to be discontented, and think they should be better off anywhere else. Many people have given their indentured servants their liberty—but ours will not accept it, though it has been offered. The woman says, 'No, I know you want to be rid of us and so I won't go!' Oh, it is a miserable system!²

'The plague of every settler with his servants is beyond calculation', groaned another settler, Captain William Shaw, and there were many who echoed his groans. James, better fitted to be a master than were many settlers, themselves unadapted to hard physical work and country life in the raw, was also in a position to realize fully the 'miserable system's' hardship to both sides. As a magistrate he had to discipline servants who absconded from their masters and he also had official knowledge of masters who, like Lautour and Peel, failed to carry out their part of the contract and whose servants were therefore released from their bond.

Of the natives James had little to say. They were not very numerous, he thought—perhaps not more than three hundred had been seen between the settlement and Leschenault; they

¹ James Henty to Colonial Secretary, Perth, 12.6.30 and 20.7.30. Lands Department records show Charles Gee as owner of Perth Block P8 and John Chipper as part owner of H4 and H14. Camfield's carpenter Richard Smith owned G13. All these properties are in the centre of the present city.

² Mrs. Ann Whatley, *Diary*, p. 11. Dr. John Whatley and his wife arrived Fremantle in the *Atwick*, 19.10.29. Only a few months later Dr. Whatley, a non-swimmer, was drowned in a boat accident on the Swan. Mrs. Whatley returned to England in the *Cleopatra* via Launceston, where her second daughter was born and was named after the schooner *Kate*—in from Swan River on the night of the baby's birth, and for her mother a last link with the settlement. During her short time in the West, Mrs. Whatley had proved a spirited settler, admired for her courage in meeting difficulties and discomforts as well as in the final calamity that took her away.

went naked, except occasionally for a kangaroo skin thrown over their shoulders, and they kept their women and children hidden from the sight of white men. They were very ignorant, said James, seeing no inconsistency between that statement and his next, that they were expert fishers, threw the spear beautifully and were skilled mimics of every English word spoken to them (as presumably their fathers had been of the banter of the French sailors and before them of the Dutch). Though on the whole harmless, they were not, he said, to be trusted too far. In this, he was right. The mutual interest, the toleration and even amusement, of the earliest days, had inevitably been replaced, where there was settlement, by hostility on both sides; theft was the cause of the first clashes, and white ignorance of native ways was now reinforced by resentment and fear. When James wrote, the first shooting and the first spearing had happened: next year, murder was to force the official policy of benevolence to be exchanged for armed control. But meantime exploring settlers felt only a natural wariness of natives met far from settlement in the bush, and relied on them for guidance through unknown country. James had his anxious moments with the aborigines, but made friends with them by tricks of burning glass and 'first aid' and never came to blows.

James's letter to Worthing touched also on his own affairs—his good and bad fortune with his blood horses and his other stock. Nobody, he said, should bring stock from England as all descriptions except the very finest sorts could be brought from Van Diemen's Land at a tenth the expense. Provisions were what every settler should bring—plenty of provisions and plenty of cash. Some who came out with ready money, including a Mr. Leake, had made almost a fortune out of the improvidence of most settlers in landing without food. He tells of the 60,000 acres just granted to himself on the River Collie, where he hoped there would be 'keep' for a large flock of merinos and also a tolerable herd of cattle. He expects that in a few years the colony will be large exporters of sheep and cattle to all ports in the north—meaning India, Malaya, and China; 'as soon as we can raise any articles for exportation, no matter what, we shall flourish'. He foretells, as Stirling did, that Indians (i.e. Europeans from India) will use Swan River as a health resort; for the climate, he says, is undoubtedly fine

and the summer's heat will be less felt once the settlers live in proper houses, not tents or huts.

James ends with a tribute to the Governor, who acted most scrupulously up to his orders, supported by a clever young man as Colonial Secretary, Mr. Brown, and the able Surveyor-General Mr. Roe. On the whole, the establishment was very efficient, and economy was the order of the day. There were now 3,000 people in the colony—

almost without law, but being a Magistrate I dispense justice wherever I can. . . . First settlers here, I assure you, suffer privations which you in old England can hardly imagine.

'Time', James adds, 'will do wonders for us yet.'

TWO ANGRY MEN

AMONG Mrs. Currie's diary entries for June 1830 there is one reading, 'Made baby's first rusks—and failed!' Hard on the heels of this there is a surprising statement: 'Went to Fremantle returned at night having been upset in a squall off the Point—saved the boat and came home.' In reading Mrs. Currie's self-effacing pages it is necessary to remember that the missing personal pronoun relates more often to her husband than to herself.

May, a bad month of wrecks, had been followed by a tempestuous June. In the same squally weather that had upset Captain Currie, James Henty lost, first, his large boat and then his 'flat', wrecked at Freshwater Bay on her way from Fremantle up to Stoke Farm with provisions and seeds for the farm and deal boards and iron carried for the Government. The first account of this accident, brought to James in Fremantle, left him in doubt as to the safety of those aboard—one of his brothers and some of his men. His anxiety, the loss of his invaluable boat, and the extreme pain of ophthalmia, made him 'completely hipped and miserable', as he told Mr. Peter Brown; he learnt later that no lives had been lost. Not long after, a new worry beset him; he became involved in a serious dispute with the Governor on the subject of the poor quality of his grant on the Swan. While waiting for official developments that would allow him and other settlers to start work in the far off district of Leschenault—the necessary survey, plans for occasional communication with headquarters, and a measure of protection from the blacks—James had been at Fremantle devoting himself to the trading side of his enterprise. Busy at his store near the river's mouth, he travelled backwards and forwards as occasion required between the port and Stoke Farm, where the two young brothers were in charge of servants and stock. At least until the loss of his boats in June, there was means of regular communication between the three brothers, but it appears that after the accident James had not visited the farm for at least several weeks. Then, in July, that year a month of

incessant rain, he went up the river and was dismayed to find that on his grant the feed was so poor that his animals were actually starving. Back in Fremantle, he wrote to the Governor to protest. The letter was evidently not the first intimation to Stirling that James felt not only dissatisfied but unjustly treated in this matter of a grant; probably, however, even James might have found it difficult to tell the friendly Stirling to his face that grants had been made improperly to officers and not to genuine settlers, and to settlers not in strict order of application; nor, perhaps, in their talks had he made as clear as he now did his justifiable assumption that the Hentys were settlers of special potential value to the Swan. It is not difficult to imagine Stirling's wrath as he read the letter.¹

'Your Excellency', it quite properly began,

I have just returned from my farm on the Swan, and find to my great astonishment and regret, the greater part of my stock are in an actual state of want arising from the inferior and scanty herbage the land affords.

I have several times stated to your Excellency that I have a most indifferent Grant, and one which had I not been driven by necessity, I never could have accepted; even the small quantity of stock I have now on it can scarcely derive a bare subsistence, and the fact is much strengthened when it is known that my sheep have not been on it for three months.

I have also lost a second brood mare; and one of my best horses is very ill and not expected to recover.

I have stated these facts in order to show Your Excellency the necessity of giving me a considerable addition to my grant (if I am to keep my stock alive) and I will further state my opinion on the justice of my claim to a much better grant than I am now in possession of.

I came to this colony as the representative of my Father and his family, who possess sufficient capital to carry them through the undertaking they have commenced, provided they meet with reasonable encouragement from the local Government.

Your Excellency is aware that my father was one of the first who contemplated forming an agricultural establishment at Swan River; and that I came out as soon as the arrangements for the undertaking were completed. On my arrival, to my great surprise and disappointment, I found all the land on the Swan given away, except

¹ F. I. Bray, 'The Hentys at Swan River' (*W.A. Hist. Soc. Jour.*, vol. i, pt. viii).

the utterly worthless and the Government reserves (although very few settlers had arrived before me). On referring to the plan at the Surveyor's Office, the grantees appear to consist principally of Naval, Military and Civil Officers, whose claims it is not my intention to question: without delay I sought for land on the Canning, and made choice of two grants, either of which I thought would have answered my purpose; my application was refused, in consequence of prior claimants having applied for the same land; one of whom I believe to have been Captain Hobbs of the 'Thomson', since left the Colony.¹

After declining to give me the Peninsula Farm, which Your Excellency wished to reserve for a Racecourse, I was given a grant on the Swan, which Captain Bannister had thrown up, and a small part of the upper Government reserve was added to it. This forms my present grant of 2000 acres; 1700 of which are composed of white sand; upwards of 100 acres of swamp and useless land, and under 200 of really useful, or cultivable, soil, and much of the latter produces nothing for cattle or sheep to graze on.

I am made much less satisfied with my grant when I find a great number of individuals, who have arrived in the Colony subsequent to myself, put into grants far superior, which I was led to believe were given away before my arrival, though never occupied.

My object in writing is to point out to Your Excellency the utter impracticability of keeping even a small quantity of stock upon such a grant as mine; and to request that I may obtain so much additional land as will, at all events, afford a living, for the stock which it is requisite to keep, for common farming purposes. The land I would select, and not yet appropriated, is that adjoining my land on the upper Government reserve, which, as Your Excellency is giving some to others, I may be entitled to ask for.

Having a grant to the Southward, it may be said: 'Why not send your stock there,' but Your Excellency is no doubt aware of the necessity existing in a Colony like this, for the settler to concentrate his forces as much as possible. Had I been located on land easily fenced I should not have lost my working bullocks, and by that means many months ploughing, besides the labour lost in attempt to recover them; the services of many of my men, too, have been entirely lost to me during part of the summer and autumn, by sickness; added to which, the labour required in victualling and otherwise providing for so large a concern, at such a distance, has kept me back considerably.

¹ This was so. Hobbs arrived from Raffles Bay, 19.9.29, with some of the 39th Regiment. He visited the settlement again, still in the *Thompson*, in Feb. 1830, bringing stock from V.D.L. (*W.A. Arch.*).

In the event of Your Excellency thinking my grant sufficient for present purposes, I beg to hazard an opinion of the probable result, as regards my Father and his family, whose arrival I am to look forward in the course of three or four months.

My father will have taken the precaution to provide for an emergency by hiring a ship to take him on (should he require it) to one of the other Australian Colonies, where every encouragement has been already held out to him; and I am persuaded he will feel so much disappointed and dissatisfied with his grant, as to leave him no grounds for hesitation on the subject. . . .

Stirling's reply to James's charge of improper assignment of lands was practically a challenge to take legal action. Such a step would have been almost impracticable at that time and would have gained nothing. In any case, apart from obvious considerations of self-interest, James is unlikely to have wished to make a public accusation of the sort against a man of whose personal integrity and devotion to duty he had no doubts. Nevertheless there was ample justification for James's remarks: contemporary comment supports him and the records prove him right. The names of many passers-by can be read in the lists of assignments of lands—Fremantle of the *Challenger*, Dance, Preston, Collie, Sholl, and Gilbert of the *Sulphur*, to name only a few.¹ Many of these grants, it is true, were rewards for services to the settlement, but the recipients were not *settlers* in any sense.

The rest of Stirling's letter, given below, amounted to telling James that he had had a more than fair run for his money, that his misfortunes were his own fault, and that he, Stirling, did not care a fig for the family of Henty.

In reply to that passage of your letter which relates to an extension of your grant on the Swan River, I have to acquaint you that your request cannot be complied with. One half of the Government Farm at that point was originally conceded to you, and you obtained on the 10th ultimo an extension of your upper boundary. The remainder of the farm thus broken up has been directed to be laid out in town lots for the location of small settlers with the exception of one hundred acres assigned to, and already occupied by Captain Byrne. Your representation of your grant, and its insufficiency for your purposes, might have been anticipated. On the

¹ *Ogle*, Appendix XIV.

7th November, the Surveyor General wrote to you by my direction to offer you the grant on the Canning, at present in the possession of Captain Bannister, and to acquaint you that the land you now hold and applied for was 'remote and not suited to cattle or sheep'. In fact, the Government stock have long been removed from that neighbourhood, and had you not been absent until lately for two or three months from your establishment, the disasters you complain of, if they arise from the nature of the soil, might have been apprehended and prevented.¹

I have before me all the applications for land which you have made since you have been in the settlement, and in every case except those wherein you applied for land already disposed of, you have obtained the object of your desires. You hold, in consequence a grant on the Swan (which has twice been extended), a grant on the Canning and on the Collie, amounting in all to 67,000 acres.

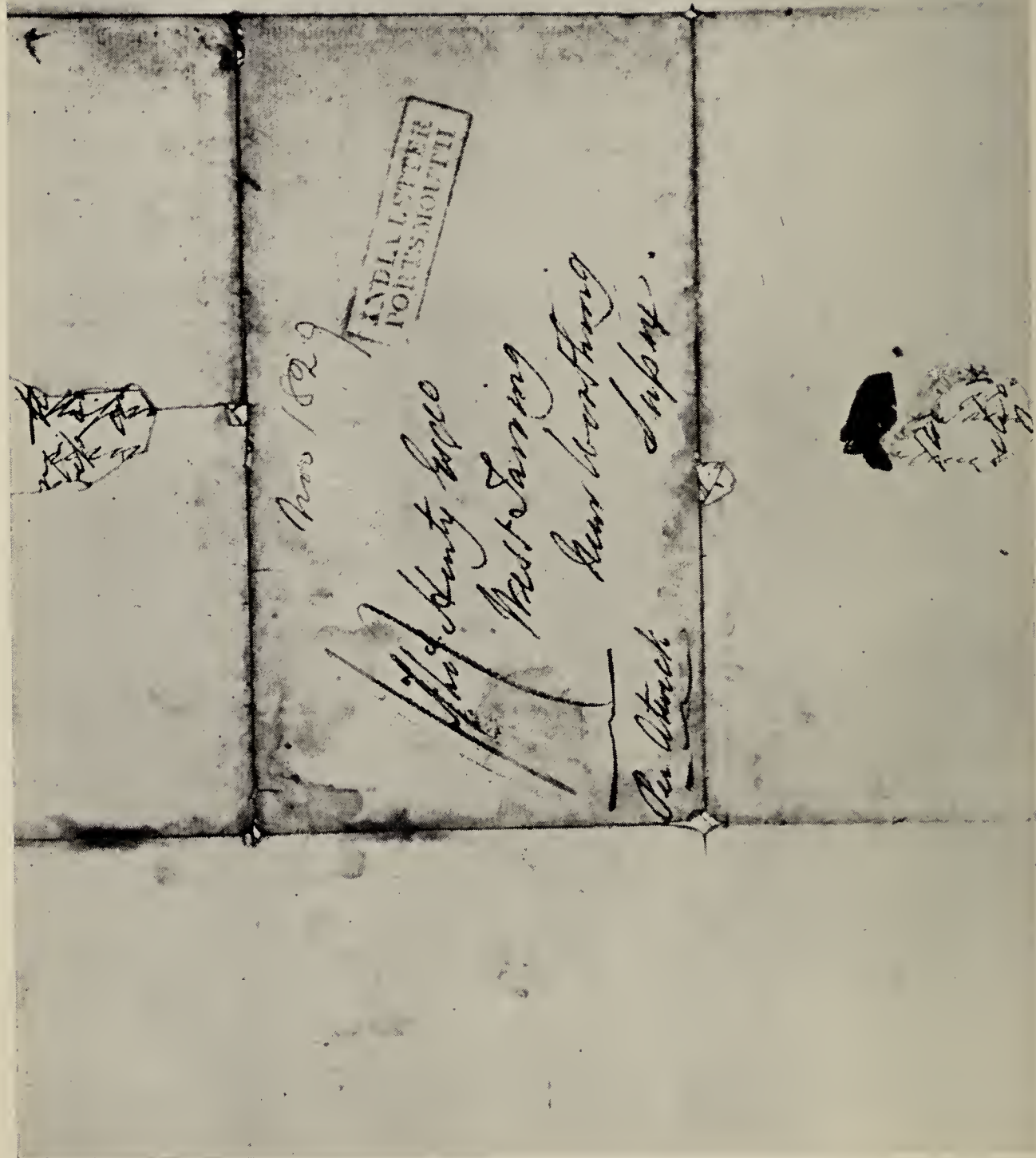
In these several concessions, which have been multiplied beyond the usual rules, I have been actuated by a constant desire to promote the welfare of your family as far as justice to others would permit. I cannot suppose, Sir, that you have been ignorant of this disposition on my part, and if you have not availed yourself of it to the promotion of your views in the grants you have obtained, the fault is solely attributable to the selections you have made. I have now averted to all those points in your letter which require specific reply. The remainder seems to divide themselves under two heads: the first of which embraces strictures and allusions on the mode in which land has been assigned in the Settlement, and the second an intimation that your family will not settle in it unless they meet with greater encouragement than has been experienced.

To the first of these, when they shall take the substantiated form of an accusation by competent authority, doubt not that I shall be able to reply. To the last, I shall only say that as long as your family remain in this Settlement, it shall be admitted, in common with the rest of His Majesty's subjects residing here, to a fair participation in the advantages the Colony may offer; but that I am not to be driven from this course of impartial dealing by the threatened secession of those who may expect greater encouragement in other Colonies.

It was a crushing reply, and had to be accepted; but James found a form of acceptance that was courteous and yet left it obvious that he was of his own opinion still. He had the honour

¹ James sold Stoke Farm to the Colonial Secretary, Peter Brown, who in the opinion of Mrs. Shaw made a very bad bargain, having given 'five hundred pounds for a very indifferent grant' (*Shaw Letters*, Jan. 1832).

20. LETTER FROM JAMES HENTY, NOVEMBER 1829



21. OUTSIDE SHEET OF JAMES HENTY'S LETTER, NOVEMBER 1829

to acknowledge His Excellency's letter, and, 'without referring particularly to its contents', begged to observe that—

in dictating my letter of the 13th I had no intention of driving Your Excellency from the course of impartial dealing.

I felt it a duty incumbent upon me to represent my case for your consideration. Your Excellency has given judgment upon it, and decided against me. I can therefore do no more. At the same time I beg to assure Your Excellency that no personal disrespect, either directly or indirectly, is intended towards you.

It was, indeed, an unhappy situation common to many besides James Henty, and due, even more than to impulsive methods of assigning the land, to the inherent character of the land itself. The two men quarrelled over a problem that science was not to solve for a hundred years. Meantime, it was the administrator's task to get the people on to as good land as could be found and it was the farmer's right to resist wasting his labour and his capital when every bit of evidence told him the land was not good enough.

ACROSS THE RANGE

WHEN Stirling, on that first light-hearted visit to the Swan in 1827, had sailed and rowed up the river to where it became merely a chain of ponds, his first aim had been to reach the range of blue hills only seven miles away, and to climb to the top. He and his party had an easy walk to the foot of the hills; the climb was steep and rocky but not difficult. From the summit, about 1,200 feet up, though the sea was invisible there was a view north, south, and west over the forested plain, with occasional glimpses of the winding river.

For a whole year after the settlement was begun, although exploration was carried far down the coast and an outpost made round the corner of Cape Leeuwin a hundred miles away, those hills to the east, so near to headquarters, were still unknown. Every settler was familiar with their outline; but for the settlement's trees, 'the mountains' could have been seen from almost every tent and hut. Soon, as more and more settlers poured in, it became imperative to find new lands nearer to the Swan than were the distant areas to the south. In June 1830, a year after the settlement's founding, Ensign Dale of the 63rd broke through the barrier that it was hoped was a screen for that receding, ever-elusive Promised Land. He returned in triumph with tales of a new river, good soil, and extensive plains and his impressions were confirmed a few weeks later by his senior officer, Captain Archibald Erskine.¹ James, writing about bills of exchange to Sir James Lubbock, head of the well known London banking firm, added the news that

The inhabitants of this Colony are now in high spirits owing to the result of a late expedition into the interior where it appears good land is to be had in any quantities and which if confirmed places the success of the Colony beyond all doubt.

Plans were made for another expedition by the Governor himself, and for the opening of the land for location. With Stirling were young Dale, who had the honour of leading the

¹ *Cross, Expeditions.*

party over his mountains, Dr. Collie, Mr. Wittenoom, the colonial chaplain, and, as before, a number of gentlemen volunteers. Henry Camfield was among these but, this time, not James Henty. His quarrel with the Governor may have had nothing to do with this—it was said of Stirling that though hasty he was soon appeased; however this may be, James, who still had about 12,000 acres due to him and did not intend to rely on other men's descriptions or on official opinions of what constituted good land, set off to examine the new country for himself. He took with him a friend called Samuel Bryan, described by Camfield as a Van Diemen's Land farmer on a large scale, two servants, two pack horses, a mule, and the ever-necessary dogs for hunting kangaroo. From notes in the same leather-covered diary that contained his Rio sketches, James afterwards wrote a long memorandum of the journey,¹ illustrating it with a sketch map showing the estimated daily mileage of their track into the mountains, across its forty-odd miles of plateau, and down to Ensign Dale's river on the other side; then to the north, down-river for a few miles along the edge of the Range; at last, turning left into the hills again and across in a general westerly line to the Swan: a ten-day journey and a walk, they judged, of about a hundred miles.

Taking different routes, both parties set off on the same day; this may have been by agreement, and not the self-assertive act by James that it looks. Early on the afternoon of 25 October, Henty's party crossed the Swan at Stoke Farm to meet the horses on the Helena River; at four o'clock, he says, they encountered the hills. They were now in strange country and not much was accomplished that night.

At half past five, tempted by an abundant supply of water and a nice spot of grass for the horses, we bivouacked on the right bank of the Helena then running E.S.E., and passed as comfortable a night as could be expected.

Next morning,

a little before sunrise we prepared to depart. When busy saddling our horses, we were, on a sudden, almost petrified on hearing two loud cooees (calls) not fifty yards from us, on the opposite bank of the river, which we knew to be those of natives. Our attention being thus

¹ *Henty Family Papers.*

directed, we observed three natives sitting in the trees close to us, apparently deeply interested in our proceedings. After the customary salutation of 'How d'ye do' we wished our sable friends goodbye, being disinclined at that moment to court any greater degree of intimacy as from their manner (though without spears) we guessed our visit at that time and place was not particularly agreeable to them. Recovering our equanimity, which was a little excited by this surprise, we proceeded, taking a due east course, among the hills some of which are covered with stones and bare of vegetation with the exception of a few scattered gum trees. Others were covered with scrub, dwarf trees and gum underwood.

Soon they got into bigger timber—'mahogany' (jarrah), white gum and red, growing in ironstone gravel, granite, and pebble quartz. Deep gullies and rocky water-courses crossed the long ascents; there was no grass, and little of anything that the horses would eat. James found the silence of the bush overwhelming. His pen, that could so firmly marshal facts, faltered when he wanted to express unusual feelings; disturbed from his normal self-certainty, he groped for words to convey the emotions roused by those first days in the Darling Range:

The grandeur of the scene among the valleys surrounded by increasingly tall white gums and the solemn silence prevailing in the bush, totally unaccompanied by any signs of civilization, imparts ideas that it is impossible to reflect on without awe and reverence and which those who have not experienced it can scarcely appreciate.

His earlier excursions had been coastal, or, as on the Collie, in the company of his fellows in light-hearted mood: here, inland among the stony faces of the hills, he felt a severing of all links with his known world and suffered consciously and for the first time from the desolating indifference to man of the primeval Australian bush. Gripped by loneliness, ignored by Nature, cut off from human kind, it seems he was sustained by a heightened awareness that God himself was present and not indifferent to the helplessness of man.

The travelling was hard; at night rain fell and they were not yet skilled enough in bushcraft to know of the protecting thatch to be made from the green fronds of the grass-tree. The legs of the horses were bruised by the stones they dislodged, the men's feet were painfully chafed, and by the third day the dogs had tired so badly that they could not come up with the few

kangaroo that were seen. They covered fourteen miles that day, all of it over thick ironstone gravel without a vestige of grass, and were glad to bivouac at five o'clock by the first water seen since morning—an unpalatable pool with fair pickings for the horses round its edges. Next morning, their fourth, at daylight

we pressed on due east; the hills became less steep and detached and could scarcely be called more than gentle undulations. The ironstone gravel and white gum still prevailed. The country, as we proceeded, altered its character and at seven o'clock a large space of white sand, so well known to every settler in Western Australia, was passed. It was covered, as usual, with banksia, (no truer indication of sandy soil) and a few wallabies escaped from the bush and from us. Blocks of granite at intervals protruded through the surface which was the only perceptible difference between this sandy tract and the country between the range and the coast. After passing this, the country immediately assumed a different character and a beautiful vale opened suddenly upon us, thinly timbered, rising in gentle ascents on either side and slightly covered with grass. We deviated from our east course to follow down this delightful opening; at the bottom large masses of granite protruded themselves through the surface in considerable profusion, some of which formed delightful basins or natural baths filled with delicious water through which a pretty little stream running E.N.E. was threading its way.

This tempting spot induced us to throw off our packs, tether our horses, and prepare for a scene which up to this time was new to us. A beautiful morning, the sun shining brightly, the birds chattering and chirping, an ample bite for the horses, altogether rendered this spot peculiarly pleasing to us. After a delightful bathe which greatly refreshed and soothed our chafed feet, and a hearty breakfast, we proceeded up the valley due east, still covered with grass. The Sheoak or Casuarina was seen hereabouts and soil visibly improved. Granite was more abundant, though a small quantity of ironstone gravel was occasionally met with as well as one or two variations of mimosa or wattle.

In the heat of early afternoon, suddenly from the edge of an upward slope they found themselves looking east over a wide view framed between two remarkable hills only a mile or so away. The gully dropped downwards from where the party stood; beyond, undulating, timbered and grassy country spread to where two parallel ranges of hills ran north and south; between those hills, they thought, Ensign Dale's river might

run. It was a country altogether different from anything that James had seen in the colony and came nearer to the picture he had built up in his mind of parts of New South Wales.

After enjoying the prospect some little time, we descended the gully and thus fairly passed the mountains or Darling Range which certainly form a barrier in a new Colony of some considerable moment.

They camped early on a small mountain stream. James badly needed rest for his feet, which he said had nearly given out; but at four o'clock Mr. Bryan set off by himself for the rocky and conspicuous hill a little more than a mile distant on their left. He found his way easily to the summit and got his view; coming back he lost his direction and 'was compelled to pass the night in the bush without fire, food, or covering'. He joined them in the morning, says James, with the opinion that the country seen from the hill-top would make a good sheep-run but was not fit for agriculture, and he reported native fires to the south-east and east.

Near their camp James found several gum trees that natives had marked by cutting away the bark in a certain pattern. He copied into his diary the two rough crescents with small dependent drops and the two full rounds with a distorted triangle between; he interpreted the marks as a record of the age of the moon at the times of periodical native visits to the spot. It was his first sight of native picture language; later they found other trees with the same marks.

On the fifth day, before moving off, James sketched the wide valley and the two hills, marking the left hand one Mt. Bryan, not knowing that it had already been named Mt. Bakewell by Ensign Dale. They were late in starting, perhaps because of Mr. Bryan's wanderings, perhaps because they lingered over the first of many sumptuous feasts off a kangaroo that James's dog, Tiger, despite his fatigue, had succeeded in killing 50 yards from the bivouac. It was the first meat the dogs had had since leaving the Swan, and they ate, says James, to their hearts' content. Immediately after starting they were on a grassy plain; almost at once they found themselves on the banks of a river 40 yards wide, the river of Ensign Dale. In the bed of a stream near by they found the tracks of several horses, only one or two days old: So—the governor had reached the new river first. Stirling gave

it the name of Avon; not for some time was it found to be the Swan, making its way to the northern end of the Darling Range before turning to flow south-west and become the river whose lower reaches the settlers knew. Despite the discovery that the two rivers were one, the name Avon remained, and remains.

James and Bryan walked upstream for three miles; finding only scanty grass and indifferent land, they decided to cross to the other bank and explore along the course downstream.

Previous to our crossing the river we were visited by two natives each with a green branch on his head. They appeared to have seen no white person before as their manner of approach was particularly shy and the green branch had never been used by the natives to the westward of the Range. Their object appeared to be to find out in which direction we were going in order that they might avoid us, as a fire to the southward indicated the position of the encampment from which it was evidently their desire to keep us. Having ascertained by signs that it was our intention to take an opposite route, after an interchange of presents, biscuits for cockatoo feathers, they bid us goodbye and left us.

The natives themselves named the objects of barter, but not with the perfect pronunciation of those frequenting the settlement on the Swan. James concluded that the Avon River natives had picked up the words second- or even third-hand from members of tribes who had visited the settlements and carried back accounts of the white invader and his words and ways.

They crossed the river where it was only 6 yards wide and not more than knee deep, and climbed a granite hill to get another view. From the top the country

appeared of similar altitude to many parts of the South Downs, wooded to the tops, between which long and extensive valleys spread themselves. The greatest portion of the land which now came under our observation was scarcely fit for pastoral purposes as, in our estimation, five acres would scarcely carry one sheep through the year.

Despite the barking of native dogs, they passed a pleasant night nearly opposite the hill where Mr. Bryan had lost his way. From this point, where the Avon rounded the mount to the spot twenty-four miles lower down where they turned west into the Range once more, they passed first over sandy loam lightly timbered with mimosa, casuarina, and straggling gums; then

along banks encumbered with tea-tree and edged with bright green rushes, where the river capriciously turned from stream to marsh, from marsh to mire and back to stream; where duck and pigeon gave them sport and food; where they were puzzled by the absence of kangaroo and where, engrossed in watching a harmless iguana lizard, they nearly failed to notice a threatening venomous snake. On the seventh day they decided to turn west. The land rising gradually from each bank of the river

afforded a very pleasing sight to the eye as a landscape but to the settler it offered no inducement whatever as the grass was far too much scattered to attract even the attention of the sheep farmer. . . . Little inducement offering for us to continue our walk in this direction and finding our provisions were much reduced, we determined to cross the river and repass the Darling Range to the Swan from our present position.

Contrary to the hopes aroused by their first alluring view of it, there had not been much to praise in the land about the Avon River and James found himself unable to confirm Dale's and Erskine's enthusiastic reports; but at least this could be said of it—east of the range *there was no sand*. Across the river they had not seen a single banksia—'or', says James, 'as Fraser unhappily terms it, "*Banksia grandis*"', that 'certain indication of sandy soil'. Nor was the mahogany, 'that so delights in sand', or the red gum, ever seen after passing out of the hills. That meant a great deal to a man whose prospects and conversation had been bounded by sand for the last twelve months.

That evening they bivouacked in a valley three miles within the hills,

our guns furnishing us with ducks, pigeons, and cockatoos which, with a few slices of bacon, hard biscuits, pepper and salt, amalgamated in our iron pot over a cheerful fire formed the materials, with the addition of a pannikin of tea, of one evening's enjoyment in the shape of supper.

Early next morning they were among the barren ridges of quartz, where nothing grew but tall gums and where deep gullies, filled with stones, turned them from their westerly course. This time, the bush silence brought James no spiritual experience: he was now merely a practical man looking for the quickest way home. There was a pleasant breakfast interlude in

a gentler valley, with mimosa and white and red gums, where the creamy spikes of the blackboy tree were in full flower and where the party enjoyed the luxury of a bath. But after that, and the next day, it was all hard marching over ironstone and granite, and in heavy rain. On the ninth day of their journey they

continued through a dreary monotonous country, flat though elevated, covered with Mahogany and thick scrub. Soaked to the skin for eight miles, gradually ascending, we suddenly found ourselves on the edge of a hill, thickly wooded, from which we had a beautiful view of the flat coast country between the range and the sea. Rottnest and Garden Islands were perfectly visible; we found that we had crossed the Range. The Swan winding its devious course beneath us twenty to thirty feet wide over a bottom of granite, on each side of us stupendous hills covered with blocks of granite and beautiful heather in full blossom. . . . We were, in fact, on one side of the gorge through which the Swan issues from the Range and, after the dreary walk experienced during the day, we were well prepared to enjoy the scene which now so suddenly burst upon us, heightened by a brilliant sun and fine afternoon. Further down the valley on the banks of the river several fires sent up their small wreaths of smoke which, from the peculiarity of their position, we knew to be those of natives. We were not aware until afterwards that a serious affray had taken place on this very day between them and the settlers, which, had we fallen in with them, might have proved serious to us as they exercise no discrimination when offended by the whites.

Climbing down the gorge, they crossed the Swan on stepping-stones, hoping to reach some habitation before night. But darkness caught them, and with it heavy rain, and they were compelled to camp in the open once more. Choosing a large gum-tree for their last bivouac, they got a fire going in the pouring rain and, each under one blanket, slept soundly all night. They woke to find themselves soaked, under an unbroken canopy of sky; in the dark they had chosen as their shelter a dead giant eucalypt without leaf or branch. Distant voices and other sounds of civilization came to them in the early air. In a quarter of an hour, making for the sounds, they had walked themselves dry and arrived soon after at the establishment of Mr. Brockman¹—not, as they had expected, at the grant of Mr. Colonial Secretary,

¹ W. L. Brockman, owner of a river-side grant of 2,000 acres (*Ogle*, Appendix XIV).

Peter Brown. They pushed on to another grant, Thomson and Trimmer's,¹ where they revelled in a wash, shave and breakfast. By one o'clock they reached Stoke Farm, having accomplished their journey, as James says, 'without accident or severe fatigue'.

Nowhere in James's diary of the journey is there unqualified praise of land seen across the Avon. Apparently, however, he had noted one portion that looked well worth having and for this he had made up his mind to apply as soon as he reached Perth.

¹ Douglas Thompson of Chiswick and Spencer Trimmer of Ealing (*III H.R.A.*, vol. vi, p. 634).

SWEETHEARTS AND WIVES

A SOCIAL PROBLEM OF THE THIRTIES

THE bachelor friends of Henty's man, Bushby, were probably not exceptional in wishing they had married before leaving England and had brought their wives with them to the Swan. 'Young Ladies', wrote the wife of Captain William Shaw, late of the Rifle Brigade and now of Belvoir, on the Upper Swan—'Young ladies are so scarce that the gents are ready to marry what are here.'¹ Mrs. Shaw and some other sympathetic matrons promised the bachelors to try to get them a cargo of young ladies, though for the honour of the sex they 'tell the gents that most of the young ladies they know are too happy and well off to come to Western Australia husband hunting'. When her own Elizabeth was twelve, Mrs. Shaw began to be anxious; where girls were so few, they were sought in marriage at fifteen, and Elizabeth's mother was not at all sure that the young men around them would make impeccable husbands although they were all men of family and had moved in the first circles at home. Upon a prudent choice of a husband, said Mrs. Shaw, depended entirely the happiness or misery of a girl's life.

For married and unmarried alike, in 1830, a year after the beginning of the settlement, domestic conditions were still primitive, not only for the few who were actually on their grants but for those remaining in Fremantle and Perth. For Perth was still only a small collection of tents and huts tucked away among the gum-trees near the river's edge, and Fremantle still an unlovely huddle of temporary shelters exposed on the sea coast. The ladies of the civil establishment had moved from Garden Island to the mainland before Christmas, Mrs. Currie joining her husband at Eliza Bay, 'a sweet spot' not far below Perth. There, in January, while the temperature soared, her baby was born in a tent and put into the long clothes of convention despite the thermometer's 112 degrees. In February heat a christening was held, Archdeacon Scott officiating, the Governor 'attending',

¹ *Shaw Letters.*

and Mrs. Stirling standing sponsor for an English aunt; afterwards the company dined, and later Mrs. Currie was privately churched.¹ After the arrival of the little Jane Eliza, 'my own Marco' of the diary becomes 'dear Papa'. The Curries' was a favourite calling place, but the names of dinner or breakfast guests interspersed in the diary among those of ships are nearly always of the gentlemen of the settlement, sailing, riding, or walking up and down the river on business; rarely is a lady mentioned—they were all tied to their canvas or mud homes. Only Mrs. Stirling, when not busy with a baby, had the opportunity to move about the settlement, playing her part as governor's wife.

Camfield's sisters felt concern at their brother's uncared-for life in the wilds. His first letter home, ending with the postscript 'write me often, write soon', left Fremantle by the *Caroline* in November 1829, landing at Penzance the following May; sister Maria's answer reached him in September, breathing the affection that he needed and bringing him welcome messages from friends. Whenever a ship was sighted making for Gage's Roads the news was announced by the hoisting of the Union Jack on Arthur's Head—'a signal for all Fremantle to run about with their telescopes to find out who and whence she might be'²—and travelled rapidly up the river to Perth and beyond. Every settler's first thought was of letters from home: the effect of repeated disappointment, Camfield said, was inconceivable to people in England, and 'no one but those so far from home, who have lived so long with, and loved so truly, so many of his own kin can fully appreciate a letter from one of the beloved'. As to his welfare, he wrote stout reassurance to his anxious family:

I beg you will not distress yourself much about me, I assure you I go on remarkably well, all things considered, and am now as much wedded to my new farm, as I used to be to my old; I leave it for a day with the greatest reluctance, some friends at Perth pretend to be seriously angry with me, thro' my not going to see them, as for Fremantle, I dislike the very thought of, I had as lief take a dose of castor oil.

Maria, it seems, had put out feelers about a wife for Henry, and had repeated, with proper indignation, somebody's remark that

¹ *Currie Diary*.

² *Ann Whatley Diary*.

to be suitable for life at Swan River girls should not be 'too nice'. Henry shared her indignation:

'Tis true we are obliged to work hard, very hard, our hands are dirty, beastly vulgar corns upon them; our clothes, instead of being built at Stultz's are common slops from Wapping, but does it follow because your outward carcase is brown, common and ugly, that the inward man must be vulgar and common too? I assure you, none *but nice girls* will do out here, the others won't keep.

Maria reported that a certain Laura was talking of going out to the Swan; apparently Laura was plucking daisy petals over the possibility of a marriage between Henry and herself—she would . . . wouldn't . . . she would. . . . Some stipulation was evidently made by Laura that was not to Henry's liking: 'what nonsense that is', he exclaimed; if, he said, instead of putting forward such a suggestion, she had set foot in the ship that brought it, and if they had agreed upon matters after talking them over, he would have had nothing to do but put her in his boat and scull her to the other side of the river, where Mr. Wittenoom, the chaplain, would have been glad to marry them forthwith. Said Henry, 'We don't stand shilly shally here'.

As an alternative to the finicking Laura,¹ Maria proposed their coming out to Henry themselves. What was he to say? Writing on his sea-chest in a wattle-and-daub hut, after an 'excellent breakfast' of rice and coffee made from burnt grain, with the first mosquitoes of the early summer already attacking his bare foot; looking around him at the stark Australian edition of Burrswood and seeing the English Burrswood's green lawns and shadowed gardens with his inner eye—Henry found himself unable to give a decided answer; it was his turn to pluck daisy petals—they should not come . . . they should . . . they should not. . . .

I don't know what to say to you my dear Sisters about coming out, the Colony is young, as for comforts we have *none*; you have seen the letters of the first settlers (we have had them back again, the authors are all known) the time past has been bad enough for ladies, the worst perhaps is gone, but the *ruffing* it is not, nor can be for some few years, and when I reflect on the numberless luxuries you enjoy in

¹ Possibly that Laura who was a daughter of T. (? J.) Dean, of Brunswick Square, London, friend and business man of Henry's father, both mentioned in later Camfield letters.

England I don't know what to think about your coming here . . . in the neighbourhood of Perth fresh provisions are to be had daily, wines, cheeses, etc., but we have not English houses, servants, and many other accommodations which you, for so long, have been accustomed to; as for my wanting a housekeeper, that's dust in the balance.

Still . . . should they decide to come (and his brother William might make it answer here) needless to say he would do his best to help them, and he mentioned a few of the things it was important to bring: mosquito nets, preserves, meats, pickles, vinegar, honey, molasses, bees (in wire cages), a charcoal stove, wire safes, cheese in lead, lemon juice, wines from the Cape; and would they please send him, without delay, a badly-needed cat to protect his provisions and clothes from the ravages of rats and mice.

The letter, with his doubts and these discouraging details, did not reach England until April 1831. After the trials of the second summer he had no doubts at all; he wrote to dissuade his family from coming out, and, no other and more courageous Laura appearing upon the scene, Camfield continued to house-keep for himself.

Captain Frederick Chidley Irwin, commandant of the Swan detachment of the 63rd, recruiting troops in Scotland some three years earlier had left his heart in Aberdeen. He sailed in the *Sulphur*, however, with nothing settled. Alexander Collie, *Sulphur's* surgeon, writing on board ship to his brother in Aberdeen, gossipped gently about the affair, which it was surmised would take a certain young lady and her brother as settlers to the Swan.¹ Rashly enough, the lady's name was given to Collie; more rashly, it was repeated by him to Irwin and repudiated by Irwin as the wrong one. Throughout the first years of his service in Western Australia 'Poor Irwin' seems to have dreamt of someone at home, and dreamt in vain: he told his dreams to Collie, but apparently without going so far as to divulge the lady's identity, and his letters to the lady herself brought no reply. Collie's sister-in-law, anxious to forward matters, wrote of *particular inquiries* about the captain made, as she had heard, by a lady in Aberdeen; once again, the name given—a different one from the first rumour—did not fit the

¹ Collie, 29.4.29.

dream. Irwin told Collie the lady his informant mentioned could not have been 'the one': 'The swain is most disconsolate', wrote go-between Collie to his sister-in-law; 'thrice glad would he be to hear that her name was even mentioned in your letters'. Mrs. George Collie, match-making at a distance, seems to have displeased Irwin by following the wrong trail, and Collie warns her to beware the doughty captain when he should arrive on leave on Scotland's shores. The captain fretted to be off but, while Stirling was absent in England trying to waken the Government to the true position at the Swan, Irwin had to remain as acting governor, suffering in private while he steered the settlement through near starvation and battles with the blacks. In September 1833 he was at last free to take his leave. He was away nearly four years, returning in 1837 a major, the author of a book on the Swan River Settlement, and a married man at last: but his wife, who accompanied him, was from Oxford, not Aberdeen. Disapproving parents had killed the Scottish romance by intercepting the letters from both sides: it is said that it was not only the affair that died, but the lady, stricken at the silence of her seemingly faithless lover at the Swan.¹

Surgeon Collie of the Royal Navy might chaff his friend Captain Irwin over his matrimonial hopes but, though not young, and in poor health, he kept marriage for himself in his mind, somewhat wistfully, until near his end. One of those born home- and child-lovers condemned by their profession to a wandering life, he was full of feeling for kith and kin, of love for his old mother and affectionate interest in the wife and numerous offspring of his brother George. He had recently returned from service as surgeon and naturalist with the expedition under Beechey that crossed the Pacific to meet the explorers Parry and Franklin on the Alaskan coast; now, after a visit home, he welcomed the appointment to the *Sulphur* that was to take him once more voyaging across the world. He might have been given some much less congenial post; in thanksgiving, he instructed his brother that Dr. William Burnett of the Victualling Office, who had pulled the right strings, was to be rewarded monthly with a box of finan haddock from Aberdeen. Collie liked the practice of medicine and was skilled in the collection of natural history specimens. From his recent voyage he had brought back

¹ Tradition among Irwin's Perth descendants.

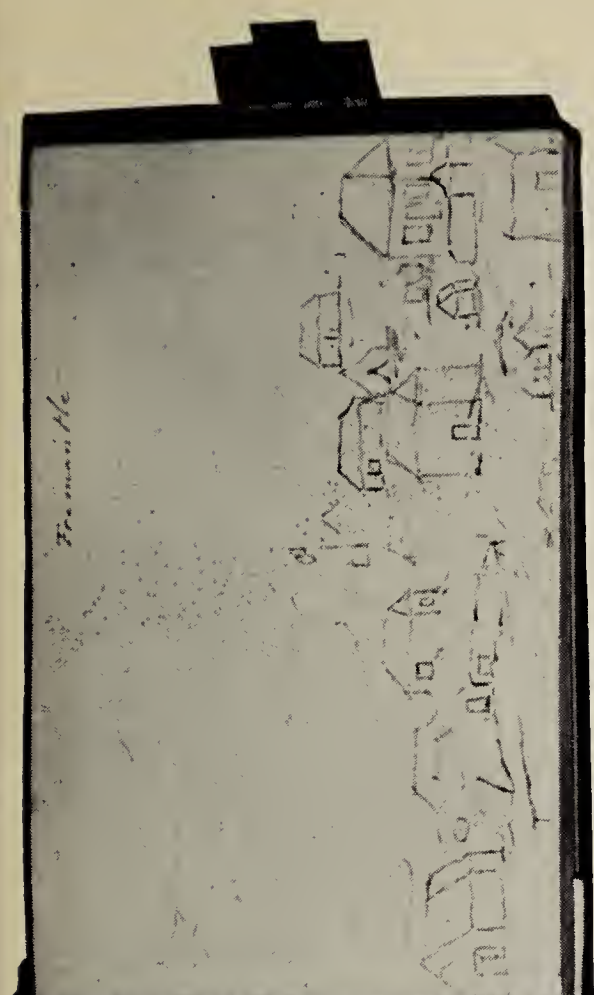
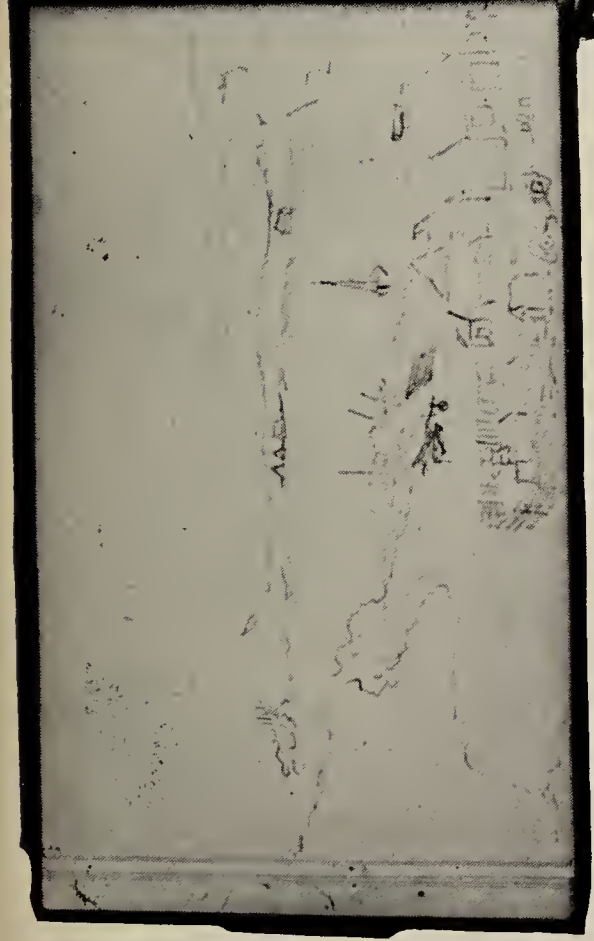
the skins of tropic birds, furs of the chinchilla from Peruvian ports, prehistoric whale bones hacked from the ice cliffs of the Arctic regions;¹ at Swan River, another climate and other geological formations would present for his observation a different range of flora and fauna, many of them new to the scientific world. Perhaps it was also concern for what he referred to as his 'old complaint of spitting blood' that made him glad to go to sea again. On board the *Sulphur*, as he wrote from the Cape, a person happening to be indisposed found Captain and Mrs. Dance so kind and agreeable that it was paradise to be in their care; he was pleased to have a fruit cake, baked by George's wife, to give Mrs. Dance as a small return. After landing at the Swan he found his health nearly re-established, though his cough was not much diminished. In that first summer, the scorching sun that killed three sowings of wheat suited him so well that he was able to make long trips to collect shells and flowers and to explore with his colleague, Lieut. Preston, inland and to the south. For these exertions the explorers received free grants of land. What should he do with his? asked Collie. For profit, he was certain that the settlement must produce other things than the grain of English fields; many intended to plant vineyards, some to cultivate the poppy for opium—presumably, he said, for the China smuggling trade; others were to raise tobacco and olive trees. He doubted if many of his acres were good; later, he would tell them if a fortune were to be made: 'at present I do not require either a grieve, ploughman, or even a herd'.

Serious, but never solemn, Collie reported the trials of the colony's first months, the scarcity of good land and the superfluity of settlers

of all sorts and sizes—half pay officers, speculators, stock jobbers, Jews (I have not noticed any Christians) lawyers, doctors, sutors, tailors, poachers, etc., etc. . . .

and a few farmers of considerable capital who seemed indisposed to accept their grants in the form of acres of sand. If anyone, he told George, asked why Collie had not written to him about the settlement, 'pray tell him that when the first year, so fatal to infants, is over, I may be able to prognosticate, but not till then'.

¹ Captain F. W. Beechey, R.N., *Narrative of a Voyage to the Pacific*.



22 a. FREMANTLE, 1829
Sketch by James Henty



22 b. FREMANTLE
Sketch by James Henty, probably of his landing-place and shed

20
This Indenture, made the first Day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty nine Between Harry Hersey of the age of forty one years and upwards, in the County of Bedford of the one part, and Thomas Herby of the County of Bedford of the other part, Witnesseth, that in consideration of the Covenants hereinafter entered into by the said Thomas Herby the said Harry Hersey doth by these presents contract and bind himself with and to the said Thomas Herby his Executors, Administrators, and Assigns, as the Agent of the said Thomas Herby in the Settlement on the Swan and Canning Rivers, or King George's Sound, or in the Colony of Van Diemen's Land, or New South Wales, and to make himself generally useful in the service of the said Thomas Herby his Executors, Administrators, and Assigns, as he or his Agent may direct, for the Term of five Years, to be computed from the first Day of September next. AND the said Harry Hersey doth hereby covenant, promise, and agree with and to the said Thomas Herby his Executors, Administrators, and Assigns, as the Agent of the said

by these Presents in manner following (that is to say), That he the said Harry Hersey shall and will during the said Term of five Years, to the best and utmost of his Skill and Power, employ his whole time in or about the proper Business and Employment of a Blacksmith and otherwise as aforesaid, in the Service of the said Thomas Herby his Executors, Administrators, and Assigns, or in the Service of such other person as he or the said Parties shall from Time to Time direct; and generally shall and will conduct himself during the said Term as a dutiful Servant in the capacity hereinbefore mentioned AND in Consideration of the Covenants entered into by the said Thomas Herby the said Thomas Herby doth promise and agree to provide a passage for the said Harry Hersey his Wife and Children, from the Port of London or Portsmouth, to the said Colony or Colonies or Settlement, ~~together with proper and sufficient food during such Voyage.~~ AND shall during the said Term of five years pay or cause to be paid unto the said Harry Hersey the clear annual sum of twenty pounds of lawful Money of Great Britain; the Wages or Salary to commence on his arrival ~~at~~ estate in Van Diemen's Land, New South Wales, or the Settlement on the Swan and Canning Rivers AND shall during the said Term of five Years ~~provide for the said~~ provide for the said Harry Hersey his Wife and Children, to commence from the arrival of the said Harry Hersey in either of the said Colonies ~~AND~~ also provide for the said Harry Hersey and his said Wife and Children, such Fuel and Food as are by the existing Regulations of the Government of the said Colony or Colonies, in like cases, required to be provided AND the said Parties hereto mutually bind themselves to each other for the due performance of this Contract, and of the respective Covenants herein contained and agreed to be performed on their respective parts, in the Sum of two hundred Pounds of lawful Money of Great Britain, to be recovered by Action of Debt or otherwise, in any Court of the Colony or elsewhere, duly authorized to take cognizance of the same. In Witness whereof the said Parties to these Presents have hereunto set their Hands and Seals the Day and Year first above written.

Signed, Sealed and Delivered. }
in the presence of }

Harry Hersey
Thomas Herby
I, the said Harry Hersey do further agree for myself, my Wife and Children, (named in the Margin) to bind myself responsible that each and all of them separately do serve the Party or Parties, or them or their Agents as aforesaid (named in the accompanying Indenture), faithfully and diligently, as their services may be required, during the five Years I have bound myself and them to serve the said Party, to be computed from the first Day of September next, in Return for which Thomas Herby agrees to provide my Wife and said Children with such Board and Fuel as are by the existing Regulations of the Government of the said Colony or Colonies required to be furnished AND the said Parties mutually bind themselves to each other for the due performance of the above Agreements, in the Sum of two hundred of lawful Money of Great Britain, to be recovered by Action of Debt or otherwise, in any Court of the Colony or elsewhere, duly authorized to recover the same. Witness that this first Day of September 1829

WITNESS

By courtesy of the Trustees, Public Library of Western Australia

23. INDENTURE OF HARRY HERSEY, BLACKSMITH, 1829

At the end of the year his prognostication was that the settlers' children, or their children's children, might be gainers but that the first-comers themselves would never obtain at the Swan the comforts they had left behind.

Early in 1831, Collie was sent to King George's Sound as the first Government Resident appointed after the convicts sent there from New South Wales were withdrawn and the station added to Stirling's jurisdiction in the West. Collie expected that his new post would be congenial to his disposition, allow him time for collecting and perhaps lead to promotion later on. Except by sea, he would be quite cut off from headquarters, 260 miles by land to the north; but the first overland journey had just been made by Captain Thomas Bannister and a road from the Swan was to be begun.¹

The *Sulphur* dropped him on the shores of the beautiful harbour, still as Vancouver saw it, and Flinders, Captain King, and the questing French. Through the lonely winter, sometimes tempestuous with rain and thunder and hail in rugged lumps of ice, he cared for his little colony of settlers and soldiers and their wives and for the many natives who came to him ill with diseases of the liver or lungs. Two of these he took for a time into his own house—the chief of the tribe, Nakina, and Mokare, Nakina's intelligent young brother. Mokare acted as guide and interpreter in all Collie's explorations until the day the boy

¹ Bannister, a settler from Steyning, Sussex, and a brother of Saxe Bannister, first attorney general of N.S.W., arrived Fremantle, *Atwick*, 19.10.29. On his overland journey to the Sound he was accompanied by a young surveyor, George Smythe, of a family made destitute by Peel, and two others, John Gringer and John Galloway. The journey was difficult and towards the end even dangerous, faulty calculations (or instruments) having brought the party out on the wrong part of the coast. On his return (by sea) Bannister reported that he had seen 'extensive tracts of the richest description, fit for the plough', &c. He recommended road-making by forced labour and foresaw the area's habitation by 'thousands of industrious men' from the parishes of England, Scotland, and Ireland (*W.A. Arch.*). Later a member of the Port Phillip Association and an aspirant for the post of Government Resident of Port Phillip (*Hobart Arch.*, Sec. of State to Arthur, 8.2.36), he had to be content with a sheriff's office in V.D.L. Called 'an agreeable addition to the party' by T. B. Wilson, who met him at Swan River (*Narrative*, p. 198), after a Hobart dinner party in 1832 another acquaintance revenged a ruined evening by making him the subject of a stinging little essay beginning 'For a gentleman Bannister is the greatest bore I ever met with' (G. W. T. B. Boyes, *Diary*, MS., Royal Society's Library, Hobart). H. Henty's notes record Bannister as 'a terrible bore', the depressing memory of his frequent visits to the Henty family remaining with him for over seventy years.

returned from the bush mortally ill; these two brothers, said Collie, would afford an excellent field for the missionary. The station had much to interest a man of scientific mind. Nearby, there was varied timber and a world of strange plants; in the Sound were plentiful whales, seals, oysters, and abounding fish; there were the vegetables of the government farm to foster by skilled treatment of the soil; for one philosophically inclined, there was amusement as well as interest to be drawn from the possession of the powers of Chief Magistrate over both natives and whites: 'only this morning', Collie wrote,

did I exercise a little sweet authority by fining two fellows for misconduct and lecturing a third. Don't I say to a blackfellow, go to the bush, and he goeth—but very reluctantly, and only so long as my eye is upon him, or the sentry's bayonet after him. Bye the bye, civil authority has not a tenth part of the allurements of military (Naval is here included). Your Justice of the Peace has to ask this man and that man what the culprit did. The poor devil, too will be heard for himself, he will tell his own story, and dare to bring witnesses for it. The J.P. can vociferate no such harmonious sounds as 'Silence, Sir, or I will instantly tie you up' 'Put you under arrest' 'Send you to your cabin' and such like. . . . The fellows on shore have the impudence, if a J.P. should be a little partial, too severe or so, to have him up before the court and make him pay the ready if he has been a bit too hasty.

When the Governor and Mrs. Stirling arrived in the *Sulphur* on a long visit to the Sound, Collie learnt of his appointment as acting-Surgeon to the Colony. Stimulated by this wider prospect and the thought of a return to headquarters, he wrote at once to ask his brother to contrive to send him some of the most approved new publications in his profession and some good general literature as well. But for a time there was nobody to replace him at the Sound, or Albany, as it was now called, and the second winter—the hungry winter of 1832—found him still an exile in the cold south. Moreover, he began to feel mopish at the thought that if the Colonial Office confirmed his appointment as surgeon, the *Sulphur*, soon to return to England, would sail without him. His 'good old mother' had died; George's children were growing up into strangers—Maggie, Sandy, Christina, Johnny, and George 'and God knows how many more'. He was nearing forty—poor pilgarlik, he called himself,

poor baldhead: day after day, nothing to do; no new faces, unless by the arrival of a vessel once, twice, or perhaps three times a year; no new books, unless he himself was to write one—but though he had plenty of time and some original material the labour was beyond him, for his asthma and cough attacked him if he sat too long at his desk. His brother and sister-in-law had written to him urging marriage: ‘I wish as much as you do to get a good wife’, he replied, ‘but I see no prospect at present of getting home.’ And, unless he went home, marriage was apparently out of the question. After returning to Perth, with his fortieth birthday behind him, he considered that though he had not got rid of the cause of his cough his health was improved and he had not the look of an invalid: but

the idea of a wife I may give up now-a-days unless some fortuitous event should place me once more among the witching women of the North and take away my *confounding* cough, for no one would marry such a broken winded animal such as I. Not but there is choice here, for we have all ages, from 15 to 45, but as there is only one or two of suitable years for me 25 to 30, I am too much restricted; too little room for choice, that.

A letter from his brother brought him news that his appointment as colonial surgeon was officially confirmed. It brought also a short but effective letter of thanks from Dr., now Sir William, Burnett, still apparently using his influence on Collie’s behalf and still so pleased with the haddocks that it seemed advisable to send him more. Collie gave his brother the necessary directions—for ‘to keep up correspondence in this way may be of future use to me and even to you and yours’.

At this time, 1833, Collie evidently envisaged that he was to have a future; he began to build a house. The furniture was to be made in Perth, but other household goods were ordered from home—china, cutlery, bedding, linen, and some clothing, including nightshirts and a supply of white beaver hats. While his house was building, but only at a ‘snail’s gallop’ because labour was so scarce, he did the little work attached to his appointment and watched with sympathy the struggles of the settlement to survive. Before this, he had changed his mind about convict labour, to which originally he had been opposed:

I have disliked the employing of convicts and the consequent mixing

up of them and their descendants with more honest adventurers as the Colony grows up; but if it is wished that this Colony should not be long a bantling I see no other means of saving it from a sickly and long childhood.

Lack of labour, lack of money, of stock and of feed; the depredations of the natives; the niggardly attitude of the Government at home; later, farmers 'nearly mad with melancholy' because cheap grain from New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land glutted the market for the Swan's first successful harvest since the settlement began—to his brother, Collie recounted it all. 'Our fate wavers in the balance', he wrote, 'and many fear it will kick the beam.' And everyone, he said, was impatiently asking where was the absent Governor, expected back from England these many months, and where were the thousands of rich emigrants, and the thousands of young ladies, that Stirling was to bring out?

Collie was in his new house before the return of Stirling, now Sir James. The house was of brick, 30 feet by 16, measured inside the walls, with six rooms and a lobby, a shingle roof, and a double verandah in front; a kitchen and a store, separate from the main house, were behind. The handsome doors were made of the local mahogany and a Pembroke table with castors was made of the same beautiful wood. Even the house bells were hung and the knockers up—'rarities in this savage land'. Said to be the best house in the colony, it had cost him (together with a paling fence and the removal of ten or twelve trees) all of £700.

Perhaps it was the encouraging effect of Stirling's return with at least a measure of success, or perhaps it was merely the result of having a comfortable home; but Collie began to feel that Swan River had a future too, though one that could be seen only dimly, and far off.

The Colony I see is not destined to make any rapid progress but I doubt not it will advance steadily and surely unless the Mother Country commits the crime of infanticide downright. What child can gain its own subsistence before 5 or 10 years? And by all I hear of Sir James Stirling's mission the necessary provisions are shared out with a most miserly hand.

In March 1835 Collie wrote that he hoped to go home in the colonial spring; he talked of letting his house and cancelled his

order for English newspapers. By the spring, his health had sunk alarmingly. Delaying his leave no longer, he took passage in the sloop of war, *Zebra*, on her way from Madras to New South Wales; in her, he could make the first stage of the long journey home. Before the *Zebra* sailed he became gravely ill; he embarked in low spirits, saying only the ordinary farewells to his anxious friends and even to the most intimate speaking no word of what he now knew lay ahead. He could go no farther than Albany, where he was carried to the house of Mr. and Mrs. Cheyne, old friends. Friends—and they spoke in the soft accents of Fife: but it was his own kin he had always wanted, and it was a wife, some witching woman of the north, that he needed now, to comfort him at the end. Two days after landing, he died, a lonely servant of the colony, and by his own wish was buried in the same grave as the young native Mokare, his guide and his friend.¹

If Mrs. Shaw, concerned with the future of her daughters, felt that the men of the neighbourhood, though acceptable in a worldly sense, would make undependable husbands, young Lieut. Bunbury of the 21st Fusiliers, looking at the same social problem from another view, was of the opinion that many of the settlers' daughters would make incompetent wives. It was the womenfolk, wives as well as daughters, of the half-pay naval and military officers that invited his scorn; they could

play the piano or harp, net purses and embroider, and are acquainted with many other elegant accomplishments but consider it vulgar to make or mend clothes and are totally ignorant of the management of a dairy, cannot make butter or cheese, rear calves by hand, cook or do any of the hard work of the house.²

Mrs. Shaw, herself the wife of a half-pay officer and not without her little snobberies, was yet no fine lady such as Lieut. Bunbury condemned; she was the dauntless drudge and companion of her

¹ The account of Collie's final illness, low spirits and death was written by Lady Stirling to Richard Sholl in Devonshire, friend and former messmate of Collie in the *Sulphur*, and sent by Sholl to George Collie in Aberdeen (*W.A. Arch.*). George Macartney Cheyne and his wife were the most prominent and permanent of Albany's pioneer settlers. Cheyne's many services to the district are commemorated by a number of names on the map (*West Australian*, 28.10.50, biographical sketch of Cheyne by Malcolm Uren and Robert Stephens). Captain Alexander Cheyne of V.D.L. was a brother of George Cheyne.

² *Bunbury*, pp. 113-14.

striving husband and a young family reduced by one of Swan River's drowning fatalities from six children to four. She had no fear that her daughters would grow up untrained in the essential tasks of a settler's household; her fear was that they were only too likely to arrive at womanhood ignorant of all those other things that books and society could teach. Whatever Mrs. Shaw's own Irish education had been—and except for the three R's it may well have consisted largely of useless elegancies of the sort Bunbury deplored—it had given her mental resources and small skills that were now of infinite comfort in the primitive life to which she had come. Here she and Mr. Bunbury were agreed: far worse, he thought, than the lot of an isolated settler's wife was the risk that her children would be

brought up as demi-savages, and, without the care and attention which one has no time to bestow, become scarcely more civilized than the young blacks with whom they associate.

At Swan River there was not, said Bunbury, the corruption of association with convict servants, as in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land:

here, want of education and coarseness of manners are all that need be feared. Still that is more than sufficient to make parents pause before they expose their children to such evils.¹

This was exactly what Mrs. Shaw lamented—neither she nor her husband could find time to devote to the improvement of their daughters' minds. At twelve, Elizabeth could not write correctly and had scarcely begun to understand what arithmetic was all about. And yet she and little Mary, said their mother, 'sometimes emit flashes of wit and good sense that would not disgrace the best educated'. Seven-year old Mary, who loved to play with her dolls, was fretted by the constant bustling; when mother and daughters were too tired to go on working they would sit for a while, and Mrs. Shaw, taking the new baby, Lucy Ellen, in her arms, would sing them back to serenity. Once, Mary nearly escaped from the Swan household to live the normally unburdened life of a child in a well-to-do home. 'A very lovely and ladylike Mrs. Viveash', who 'dared not attack the roughing of it in this Colony', was so taken by Mary that she wished to carry her off to Van Diemen's Land and there adopt

¹ *Bunbury*, p. 117.

and educate her as her own.¹ Mrs. Shaw for Mary's sake would have faced the parting, but Mary's father was so harrowed by the thought of losing yet another child that the plan was given up. Elizabeth not long before had had her glimpse of the great world. The Governor and Mrs. Stirling, visiting the settlers on the Upper Swan, had been captivated by Elizabeth and, much to her mother's gratification, had invited her to stay with them in Perth. The visit began with a grown-up ball attended by a number of visiting Grandees, as Mrs. Shaw called them, down from India, and by the settlement's officers and their wives; Captain Bannister, the hero of the overland journey to King George's Sound, was there, the magistrates, and settlers like the Shaws themselves. The affair was brilliant with jewels and dresses from the older world, with naval flags and gay music; for the lavish supper, set out in a marquee, even jellies had been contrived. Elizabeth, in book-muslin and a long sash, looked on spellbound at the enchanted scene. Several times gentlemen asked Mrs. Shaw's permission to lead her daughter out to dance, but untaught Elizabeth could not attempt it and had to decline. Mrs. Stirling, watchful of her protégée, took her by the hand and said 'You shall dance at the next ball, I'll teach you myself'. Elizabeth's visit lasted several weeks; 'a better and a nicer child could not exist', said Governor Stirling, and asked her to accompany them in the *Sulphur* on their forthcoming expedition to King George's Sound. It was a tempting invitation; they expected to remain in the cooler south for the three summer months. Elizabeth, barely twelve, unschooled in arithmetic and ballroom arts, had learnt more fundamental lessons; she thought of the baby that was soon to be born at home, and politely declined. The reason she gave delighted Mrs. Stirling: Elizabeth

¹ Mr. and Mrs. C. B. Viveash arr. Fremantle 1.2.31 in the *Drummore* with their brother- and sister-in-law Mr. and Mrs. W. Tanner of Wiltshire. Their adventures in reaching Australia are outlined by their fellow passenger, George Russell, in his *Narrative*, pp. 43, 44. The Viveashes (she was a Miss Tanner) went on to V.D.L.; the Tanners (she was a Miss Viveash), according to Mrs. Shaw 'people of large fortune who left England merely because they were fond of seeing the world', remained in the West, bought 'a very large handsome wooden house' on the river bank from Mr. Dunnage, a clergyman who had left the colony; they lived 'in good style, having brought thirty one servants into this colony with them, they originally shipped fifty with them, the rest went with Mr. Viveash to Van Diemen's Land'. Tanner was a successful settler and became a member of the first Legislative Council to contain non-official members. In 1838, on a visit to England, he persuaded Dr. Samuel Waterman Viveash to emigrate to W.A. (*W.A. Arch.*).

said she thought Mama would want her before the three months were up.

Mr. Bunbury, stern critic of some of the womenfolk at the Swan, was stationed for some time at the Vasse, a hundred miles to the south and near to a family whose girls were surely a pattern of all that any settler could desire in a wife. Fanny, Bessie, and Mary Bussell were indefatigable little cheesemakers, 'washers, bakers and tailors', with every domestic talent on Bunbury's list—indeed, they must have been in his mind when the list was compiled; yet, on a visit to Perth, they were as smart as any idler, appearing in church, all three, in 'sweet little bonnets', pink fichu handkerchiefs and white frocks.¹ Mr. Bunbury must have thought them models of sense and industry; they thought Mr. Bunbury charming, if a trifle satirical and not quite as clever as was commonly supposed.² On the Perth visit, in June 1837, the sisters were much in demand. From the house of Mrs. Peter Brown, wife of the colonial secretary—'a very pretty young woman, with the whitest skin, and the prettiest black hair and eyes' she ever saw—Fanny wrote to her brother John of various attentive bachelors—a strange combination of conquests, she called them. Amongst them was Bunbury's fellow officer in the 21st Fusiliers, Captain W. H. Armstrong, 'whose amiability and tenderness of manner hits my fancy amazingly. We parted with more regret than one commonly feels for only a dancing acquaintance'. Another was—

poor Mr. Camfield, who I fear is in a sad state of depression in his affairs, he brightens up when we are with him and I am really surprised to see the influence which even a look has upon him but we have not been thrown much together and perhaps it is as well. . . . I have had one most serious offer too and Johnny I have again declined. . . . I could not strike my colours and your little Fan is still free in hand and heart.³

Heart and hand were later bestowed by each of the Bussell sisters at the moment of their own choosing: for their brothers, dairying and growing vegetables far from Fremantle and Perth, with no female society but that of mother and sisters, the question of marriage was much more difficult. Vernon Bussell, of an age to marry and 130 miles from the sight of an eligible

¹ Mary Bussell, 20.4.35.

² Fanny Bussell, June 1837.

³ Ibid.

girl, thought the following remedy was worth the risk: he wrote to Captain Joseph Toby, late of the Government schooner *Ellen*, frequent visitor to the Vasse and then in England, commissioning him to bring out a wife. 'When you receive this', he wrote:

you will undoubtedly be with your friends and amongst the gay and will have an opportunity of seeing a great many nice girls now if you could persuade one to come out that you think would suit me I should be forever grateful but stop as I am to be the person chiefly concerned I will give you a description of what she ought to be in the first place she must not be [illegible] not very tall, accomplished but not Blue however you will have [cousin] Capel to give you a helping hand and between both of you you will make a good choice but the difficulty will be to induce her to put her dear little foot on shipboard I depend entirely upon you for prepossessing her in my favour and a general description of my personal perfections would it be possible to bring her straight to the Vasse it would not be safe to land her at the Swan [Sister] Fanny recommends heading her up in a cask and putting her down in the hold for fear of the susceptibility of your heart. Remember this is not fun it is the only chance a poor fellow has of getting a person with whom he can be happy trusting you will do your best for me in so important an Agency I will wish you goodbye.¹

Captain Toby returned to the colony the next year, moreover with a girl passenger in his charge. But she was not for Vernon: he remained a bachelor until 1853, when he married Mary Elizabeth Phillips, daughter of the late resident magistrate at Albany.² Vernon was then in his forties and Mary was sixteen: at the date of his letter to Captain Toby she was not even born.

In 1830 Stephen and John Henty were still too young to think of marriage; James, now thirty years old, did not need to seek the help of a Captain Toby or to compete for one of the few unmarried girls to be found at the Swan. Although in his letters James gives not one hint of it, it seems that, before the *Caroline* left England, he and Charlotte Carter of Worthing must at least have reached an understanding, though they were perhaps not formally pledged. Unlike the fair ones of some other men settled

¹ Vernon Bussell, 4.11.35.

² J. R. Phillips, an early settler and at one time at Stoke Farm, the Hentys' small grant on the Swan River (*W.A. Arch.*).

overseas, who thought it due to their dignity to insist on being fetched, Charlotte was ready to follow James out as soon as it seemed to her advisable to go. Not long after James's journey over the Darling Range, Charlotte was packing her boxes and in December 1830 she sailed from England in the ship *Atwick*, bound for the Swan.

THERE IS NO LAND

ON his way down the river to Fremantle after his excursion over the Range, James called at Perth; he intended to pay his respects to the Governor, but learnt that Stirling had not yet returned. A comparison of experiences would have been interesting and might have saved James yet another rebuff. From Fremantle, as soon as he heard that Stirling was back, he sent Roe a brief report on his own excursion, with a sketch-map and an application for 5,000 acres marked on the left bank of the Avon between the two conspicuous hills. Roe replied a fortnight later that, 'as far as can be ascertained from the information in this office', the land applied for was included within the limits of a space reserved for the town of York; therefore Henty was to amend his application and was referred to a plan of the new country visible daily in the Surveyor-General's office where he would learn what lands were already assigned. The Governor is nowhere mentioned in the letter, but presumably it was by his direction that James was apprised that his present claim must include the remainder of the land that he was entitled to select. A second letter from Roe is missing; James's answer to it indicates that he had been urged to apply for a specific grant several miles to the south of his first choice, a suggestion that did not commend itself to James. With somewhat lofty logic he wrote that

The Governor having refused my application for a grant in the same district which *I had seen*, I consider it would be folly in me to make any application for land which *I had not seen* and consequently can know nothing *about*.¹

He made no further move to obtain land in the York district, on the other side of the Range.

Meanwhile, nothing had been done to forward settlement at Leschenault. Official interest had moved to 'the new place' round Cape Leeuwin, perhaps to be called Stirling and that, according to James, might replace Perth as the seat of government

¹ *W.A. Arch.*

if the harbour proved good, the Governor, he said, being only too anxious for an excuse to move farther south. Leschenault's military post was removed to this fresh field, and Leschenault's town site, its villa grants, Henty's 60,000 acres and the large areas chosen for themselves by Stirling and Roe, all remained simply marks on a sketch-map of unsurveyed land. In the middle of the summer of 1830-1, Stephen Henty, Camfield, and Samuel Bryan, with W. K. Shenton, an engineer, paid a visit there; it was called in the official record an expedition to explore the Collie River,¹ but their object, Camfield told his father, was to look at Henty's grant. James, now a year wiser than when he had seen the country and made his claim, hardly expected a good report. The party sailed down in a large boat belonging to James, taking four days and, according to Camfield, experiencing

the usual quantum of hair breadth escapes, upsetting of boats, natives, kangaroos, cockatoos, etc., etc. . . . We went up the Collie, saw the grant, and were disappointed what with the native fires, the summers heat, there was very little feed, indeed on his grant there was nothing worth mentioning, and little ground fit for cultivation. A few settlers may possibly get on here, but it can never be a flourishing Colony, at least, after what I have seen, such is my humble opinion.

They had meant to walk the ninety miles back to the Swan while the boat's crew sailed home, but when they returned to their boat at the mouth of the inlet they were surprised, says Shenton's report, 'at being hailed by two men on the opposite side of the Bar, one of whom swam over to us, telling a long tale of shipwreck and begging to be taken to the Swan River'. Camfield says the men represented themselves as wrecked sealers who had had nothing to eat for four days; the party, however, suspected them to be convicts escaped from Van Diemen's Land or King George's Sound. Convicts or sealers, nobody cared to trust them alone with the boat's crew; the walk home through country reported to be good was abandoned with regret and they all sailed back together.

Camfield's opinion, humble or not, and the impressions of the rest, confirmed James's expectations: the grant was totally

¹ *W.A. Arch.*

unfit for either grazing or the plough. Perhaps of most weight was the opinion of his friend Sam Bryan. Mr. Bryan had arrived six months before from Van Diemen's Land 'to look about him', bringing not only stock and food but a house, and was in a position to compare the two colonies;¹ he can have thought no better than Camfield of the Collie River district, for his visit there did not dissuade him from returning to Launceston shortly afterwards with unflattering views of the Swan River Settlement as a whole. They were views held by many besides Bryan at the end of this, the second dry summer, when once more the harvest, planted too late, had sprung and then failed: 'Henty never gathered a handful of wheat', Camfield told his father; his own successive sowings had not even come up. Many people had eaten their seed potatoes and crops from the few that were planted had been destroyed by a caterpillar plague. It was now clear that the settlement must rely on imported food for a long time to come; but with money as scarce as local wheat few were in a position to buy. The previous spring, when Camfield had broached his last cask of biscuit and his last of pork, he described his dollar bag as *very gaunt*; now, he said, there was only one settler with a supply of ready cash and the rest were dependent on barter: 'if a man wants provisions he sends his cart, plough, harrow or some other goods which he is not in immediate want of but this cannot last long'.

Without money, or enough food, the settlers were also without security, for the colony's long-expected charter had not yet come. Without the backing of a charter the Governor's hands were almost tied; Stirling, according to James, had become so nervous of acting on his own responsibility that he would scarcely take action at all, and Camfield reported that

The Governor and the whole Colony had been in a state of anxiety for some months. . . . The *Eliza* was expected in in November with the Charter and now February has arrived without any decided news from England, indeed none relative to this place. What is the Government about?

Swan River, at a standstill, felt as forgotten as Sydney had done forty years before. News, when the *Eliza* brought it, was of the Old World, of the death of George IV, of riots in the English

¹ Arrived in the brig *William* 6.6.30 from V.D.L. (*W.A. Arch.*).

agricultural counties and of revolution in France: of their own future, nothing:

It is a sad state to place the Governor in, it is worse for us settlers, we know not at this moment whether it is to be a Colony or not, those who may have money will not lay it out, those who have a little would be glad to go away if the Colony is not to be supported before they waste that little.

By the end of 1830 some of the *Caroline* passengers had already admitted defeat; three of them had found modest security by accepting civil appointments—Talbot was a commissioner and secretary of the Board of Council and Audit (though after a few weeks he resigned, ‘owing to pressure of work on his land’); Alfred Stone was clerk to the magistrates at £100 a year and wanted to sell his grant; Mackie was Chairman of Quarter Sessions and, according to Camfield, doing nothing with his; Everard, the sailor, had gone to Van Diemen’s Land; Henty and himself, said Camfield, were the only regular settlers from the *Caroline* and were determined to stick it—after all, the same God made England and this apparently barren land: somehow, they would be saved from want. But the severe lessons of the second summer taught James that it would be folly to stick it any longer. Believing his father might already have left England, he wrote to the family friend, Dr. Cloves, that he had decided to leave the West for Van Diemen’s Land. The decision was not easily reached, for he was not in the habit of changing his mind—his motto was *When I saddle, I ride*. As early as the previous August, talk of the advantages of Van Diemen’s Land, no doubt emphasized by Mr. Bryan, had made him wonder whether, when his father landed at the Swan, he would not be disposed to go on to Van Diemen’s Land instead of remaining in the West; but five more months had to pass before James saw clearly the uselessness of struggling on. Though still in ignorance of his father’s whereabouts, he followed up his letter to Dr. Cloves by writing to Thomas at length:

My mind is now finally made up to quit the Settlement altogether and to proceed with what Capital I can muster to the Launceston side of Van Diemen’s Land. I have come to this decision with the greatest caution and circumspection and after weighing every circumstance connected with either side the balance was fairly turned against the Colony. . . . The real fact is there is no Land . . . there is

no more prospect of a return from the land now than there was last season and therefore Capital invested in farming is completely thrown away. It is my firm and fixed opinion that this country cannot become an agricultural Colony. . . . If you had been placed in my situation here you would have come to the same determination, with this difference only: you would have decided earlier. . . . I have deceived myself too long.

However keenly James resented the official misrepresentation of the Swan, he must also, if only in his own troubled heart, have blamed himself for being misled. With all his common sense and caution, he had allowed Stirling's superficial acquaintance with the West to outweigh all that he himself knew of the eastern colonies, not only from published sources but from John Street's letters over several years: in fact, James, the practical farmer and man of business, had made a bad mistake. Had he emigrated first and alone to look at the Swan for himself he might have decided against it in a few weeks; but inspection first would have lost the privilege of free grants that at the start was limited to those who arrived with their property before the end of 1829. Nor, at that time, could any untravelled man realize the necessity for such an inspection; he could not know how far, and how different, from each other were the Australian east and west. To tell him that Australia was as big as the United States, and that from the Swan to Sydney was as far as from London to the Caspian Sea, conveyed little to someone who had never been in America or on a longer sea journey than the width of the English Channel, or farther into Europe than by coach across a few miles of France. Nor could he guess at the countless variations in a land mass of three million square miles, whose cliffy southern coasts were battered by antarctic storms and whose northern rivers flowed between palms and mangroves into tropic seas. He could not know, since it was not then known to anyone, that all the high mountain ranges lay along the eastern edge of the continent and in the still unpenetrated corner of the south-east; that in the west, without benefit of rainfall and rivers from such mountains, agriculture as Englishmen then knew it could not be achieved. To choose the west had been the blunder of ignorance. For those who could afford to leave, it was simple wisdom to go.

GOVERNED BY EXPERIENCE

HALF-WAY through February 1831 James was still completely in the dark as to his father's plans. Among the settlers the longing for letters, so often unsatisfied, was a continuous and incurable ache. Ships came in bringing few letters, or none. Somehow, opportunities were missed by even the most loving of correspondents; somehow, delay or loss made gaps in family chronicles, leaving whole chapters unknown. Mrs. Currie, recording a ship's arrival, more than once had to add the bleak words, 'No Letters'; Camfield, who got none between September 1830 and the following March, said that only a settler could realize the wretched feelings of a man whose repeated inquiries are answered by 'No, Sir, there are no letters for you'. James, writing in May 1830, is 'perplexed and disappointed' at getting nothing by the *Warrior*; he has no news of home later than the September before. He himself, as he said more than once, wrote home by every opportunity, but if his letters all arrived they were not all preserved. A very large parcel of letters dispatched by him in April,¹ taken in the *Protector* as far as the Isle of France, James thinks must have been lost in the wreck of a ship that probably carried the letters on from there; as he said, such accidents must of course be expected, 'particularly off the Mauritius in the Summer months'. The *Protector* letter is missing, possibly two more. He seems to

¹ Such parcels were frequently carried by friends, both to and from England, and sometimes by ships' captains despite the regulations prohibiting it; e.g. Captain Arckoll of the *Minstrel*, who undertook to carry home a box of letters from Henty and his men (but climbed aboard without them, leaving them in the bottom of the shore-boat, whence after some days they found their way back to a wrathful James). Charges for ship letters were:

A single letter (i.e. single sheet folded) to or from Europe, India or elsewhere	2d.
A double letter to or from Europe, India, or elsewhere	3d.
A packet or parcel not exceeding ½lb. weight	4d.

Letters on service within the colony were carried free, also the letters of non-commissioned officers, soldiers, and sailors (*W.A. Arch.*). Most of the Henty letters carry a large hieroglyphic written in ink on the outside, consistently of the same pattern and presumably the Fremantle 'post-mark'.

have received none later than July 1830, until a box of letters, already eight months old, reached him the following February by the hands of an English acquaintance who had changed ships at the Cape and had only just arrived in Fremantle by the *Drummore*. Rejoiced as James was to know that his family had been well at the date of writing, as far as information about plans went the letters were too old to be of any use; he was

still of course in the greatest uncertainty with regard to your coming out. I must therefore lay down a plan to proceed at once; or the delay will become a very serious matter.

He looked to the *Eliza*—everyone looked to the *Eliza*—to bring decided news.

But though he was uncertain of his father's movements he felt pretty sure of the lavish way in which they would be planned. After all, his own patriarchal exit from England—chartered ship, servants, stock, agricultural equipment and all—had at the time seemed sound; only after hard experience had the faults of such a method become plain. He determined to save his father and the family finances, if it were not already too late. Wisely, he tempered with encouragement the bleak wind of his warning: 'Great things may yet be done if you adhere to the advice I have so often and so urgently pressed upon you, that of the strictest economy in your outfit.' This time, no chartered ship, no stock—'except half a dozen choice Ewes to gratify your own fancy'—no provisions, for Van Diemen's Land abounds with both; one or two female servants only and one man; their good furniture from Tarring, household utensils and a few specified implements of husbandry; passages to be taken in the ordinary way in a vessel going to Van Diemen's Land and undertaking to disembark the Henty party at Launceston:

you will of course spare no expense to have everything as comfortable as ship board will allow both for my Mother, yourself and Jane; the boys can take care of themselves.

James would take with him to Van Diemen's Land all necessary farm servants, leaving behind him some of those with the largest families, as nothing could pay for their immense consumption of food. Those to go with him would probably be the George Bushbys, the blacksmith, Hersey, Dyer, a carpenter, Haybittle the thatcher, the two Hills, uncle and nephew, perhaps John

Chipper: 'these men in Van Diemen's Land will be placed in superior situations over convicts and as such their situation will be materially benefited'. James was selling his stock by every opportunity, and besides the thoroughbred horses Wanderer and Merino would take only ten ewes. In one of his missing letters he must have told how all his efforts to save Sir John and the mares Canopy and Petworth had failed; they had died through lack of proper food, and Wanderer and the mare Merino were now kept alive on the oats that James was able to buy from time to time.

At Launceston, James intended to open a store and develop trade; as agent for a number of ships he already had many respectable connexions there, as well as business with houses in India, at Algoa Bay, and the Cape.¹ He expected to be able to freight several ships a year to England, loading them with bark and wool; to send large supplies of wheat to Sydney and also to Mauritius, the vessels to return from the island with clarets and cigars—'no other segars are consumed in these colonies excepting Fine Manillas'. It was important that his father should make arrangements with some London houses to send him goods for sale on commission, but

avoid investing your property in these speculations; let the London Merchants speculate and let me sell for them until I have established a House, we shall then probably not require their goods.

If these arrangements were not made before Thomas left, James would have to lose a year or so returning to England to make them himself:

It must be understood that they send the Goods to me on sale by Commission and returns without any advance of Money on my part. There are many merchants would gladly avail themselves of such an opportunity and you have only to consult Sir John Lubbock² or some other real respectable Merchant to get the business satisfactorily begun.

The goods he wanted were regular supplies of brandy, rum, porter, ale, and wines; ironmongery, hats, and manchester

¹ He was acting for C. H. Ebden, then in South Africa but shortly to arrive in Australia where he became well known as 'overlander' and public man.

² Father of Lord Avebury, the astronomer, and head of the banking firm of Lubbock & Co. (*D.N.B.*).

piece goods, shoes in all sizes, hosiery, slops (corduroy sold best); in short, he said, go into a general dealer's shop in the country and

nearly everything you see there except provisions will sell in Van Diemen's Land. . . . These things although they may appear to you quite different from the views we formerly held with respect to these Colonies are of essential consequence if we are to succeed as I hope and intend we shall. In stating these things to you, you must not suppose it is my intention or wish to prevent our going into farming in a very large way which combined with the other is the best of all ways to get on in Van Diemen's Land.

Fortunately, his mercantile dealings at Fremantle would probably enable him to take between £1,000 and £2,000 with him to Launceston ('and depend upon it some of the best kind of farming in Van Diemen's Land is that when you lay out your money at 20%'); but, for the property they had sacrificed through the poverty of the land, he had it in mind to get up a petition to the Lords of the Treasury asking for some compensation for their grievous disappointment and loss. The compensation he would seek

would be a Grant of Land to the extent of 20,000 acres in Van Diemen's Land in lieu of the 84,000 we are entitled to here. I think you might try Sir C. Burrell as well as C. E. Smith and see what their joint efforts can do.¹ I have no doubt of their success if you represent it as it ought to be, a case of severe hardship occasioned solely by the misrepresentation put forth by the Governor and Fraser. . . . A petition, properly worded and backed I am convinced would succeed and I sincerely hope you will push it to the very utmost. Such a grant will be worth several Thousand Pounds to us in a few years—and it is the most *reasonable compensation* to ask for.

All his life, the poverty of the land in the West would remain in James's mind; but, he told his father now, even if the land were good, 'I contend a new Settlement is not the place for a Man of Capital': on the other hand, a young colony was. A settlement became a colony, he said, when it arrived at that state where property bears a value; the Swan was the one, and Van Diemen's Land was the other. New South Wales was a colony, but nothing would tempt him to go *there*.

¹ Sir Culling Eardley Smith and Sir Charles Burrell; Burrell was one of the two members for Shoreham and a Deputy Lieut. for Sussex.

Independent of the excessive heat and the uncertainty of their crops their system of Police is so bad that Bushrangers swarm throughout the country. The crops of wheat in Van Diemen's Land are certain and New South Wales draws her supplies almost entirely from her. This alone must make her [V.D.L.] rich and she has besides the same facilities for the production of all valuable produce. Her wool is inferior to that of New South Wales because they have paid but little attention to it the growing of Wheat being found by far the most profitable. All parts of Van Diemen's Land furnishes a large quantity of Bark and her Fisheries [Whale Fisheries] are beginning to be very productive. I prefer Launceston to Hobart Town because nearly all the Wheat is grown in its immediate neighbourhood and where that is grown and a Market found for it the Country about must thrive.

As to investments, through Mr. Sam Bryan ('a very clever man'), James was buying Van Diemen's Land Bank shares at 35 per cent. and mortgages at 20 per cent.; James advised the laying out on mortgage of some of his father's ready money, when he should arrive, and discussed the safest and least expensive way of bringing it out.

It must be recollected Treasury Bills can always be had in Van Diemen's Land by paying $\frac{1}{2}\%$ premium and you would have to pay 50% discount for your Bill even if upon and accepted by Lubbocks. The V.D. Land Bank may have an Agent in London (altho' I think they have not) who would receive your Money giving you an order on them in V.D. Land. You must, however do nothing without the best advice. Perhaps Government would do it for you. If so you could not do better.

He drew a pleasant picture of their future activities at Launceston:

My present idea is to purchase some good estate within a few miles of the Town for your Residence; for Charles and me to carry on the Mercantile concern, William the law, and the other lads to superintend the Herds and Flocks by competent overseers over the convicts for which our men are very well adapted. We shall then be able to manage without having convicts about your own house and premises and you and my dear Mother will be able to enjoy yourselves as much as you have done at Tarring.

Towards the end of his many pages he apologized for their lack of form:

You will find my letter a long rigmarole of unconnected matter, but *that* you must excuse. I write as the idea occurs and have little time to dress up in good language or smart turns. I have put down in plain terms matters of fact and matters of opinion, the latter governed by one year and a half's experience.

He could not be ready—stock sold, business wound up—in less than six months,

by which time you will either have received this letter or I shall have heard of your starting for this place. If it should so happen that you have not sailed I shall be rejoiced; if you have left I shall remain here until you arrive and we shall proceed together for Launceston.

THE *ELIZA* COMES IN

THE *Eliza*, advertised in *The Times* on New Year's Day of the previous year to sail in February, had at the last moment been detained—it was said 'at the request of several respectable parties'—in order that she might arrive at the Swan in the spring: and in the spring, therefore, and every day as spring warmed into summer, the Swan settlers looked for her to arrive. No other ship came to tell them that the *Eliza* had not yet sailed, nor was there any to bring the news of her departure when finally, under the command of the former sealer and explorer, Captain James Weddell, R.N., she left the Thames at the end of August. Late in January 1831 the settlers were tantalized to hear that as long ago as November the *Drummore* had left her at the Cape: at last, on 5 March, seven months out from Gravesend, the *Eliza* came in. She brought no charter for the Governor, no letters for Camfield, and 'a great and bitter disappointment' for James. Of the many letters handed to him only one was readable, one that dealt with English politics and the family health but not with the family plans: the details of these, contained in a sodden impenetrable packet, remained as unknown to James as before. The saturation of the letters was not due to salt water but to misguided motherly love. Mrs. Henty had packed letters and books and pickles all together in the same case: the pickles from the farm kitchen, probably made with her own hands, had fermented and blown out the corks. Balked of the information awaited so long, and miserable at the ruin of the 'precious books and letters from Tarring', James wished to make sure that it would not happen again. 'It will never answer to send out Tarring preserves, it is much better to go to Cooper, Cornhill, and lay out £5; his are sure to arrive good and of the very best quality.' To his father's gossip about an England that was taking agitated steps towards parliamentary reform, he replied, 'I cannot enter into your feelings with regard to the Elections in England half so warmly as I once could. I am really too much engaged in business and

at this distance the interest is much lessened.' At least his interest in the family welfare remained the same; he said he was truly happy to hear that everyone was well.

It was not only the disappointment about the letters that had so shaken James. The *Eliza* mail had brought copies of a booklet from the London printing house of Joseph Cross, publisher of maps and other colonial matter, in which were printed a number of private letters sent home by some of the settlers in 1829. Amongst these, to his great wrath, was one from James himself. The writers' names were not given, but, as Camfield said, the authors were all known. The publication of his long letter, sent home in the *Caroline*, James justly felt violated his confidence; his sense of discretion was offended and in addition his vanity was hurt.

I regret very much to see that notwithstanding my caution my letters have got into print. Had I been aware you would have placed them in Cross's hands I should of course have taken more pains with the composition and I almost regret having written at all. You have no idea of the annoyance which these things subject me to here particularly when private affairs are allowed to get into print and become the subject of laughter to every Jackanapes—I must beg, if you value my feelings at all, that you will refrain from the publication of them in future. They can do no good, and at some future day I may be charged as the Governor has been of misleading the public with regard to this Colony.

Not everyone ridiculed James for his letter. Captain William Shaw, from the *Upper Swan*, in *Perth* on a quest for letters and delayed there by tide and wind, wiled away the time with the pamphlet and referred to it in a letter to his *Leicester* friend:

I have just been reading several letters from settlers here, they are published in a small pamphlet by J. Cross, 18 Holborn, opposite Furnival's Inn. Amongst them is a letter from Mr. James Henty—a fair description as far as it goes—he is certainly unfortunate in not obtaining a good grant on the *Swan*.

James's mortification persisted and a letter written three weeks later renewed his rebuke:

I must again repeat my unfeigned regret that my letters should have been permitted to be published; although my name is not affixed everybody interested in the Colony knows whom it is, it can only gratify idle curiosity without doing a particle of good. On the

other hand it may possibly do a great mischief by inducing a person to come out here who on arrival may be much disappointed and then the blame would of course be thrown on the unlucky writer, who thought he was writing a private and confidential letter. It has also to run the gauntlet through the whole Colony. The first batch of letters including the Governor's was a subject for ridicule a long time, and now I am hauled over the coals (no pleasant operation I assure you). Besides they were never intended for publication; it is a test too strong for almost any private letter written too with the greatest frankness and without the slightest attention to grammatical arrangement. I do hope you will spare my feelings from the attacks which the publication of these letters entail upon me and refrain from it in future.

The Governor was apparently able to put the episode behind him a little more easily than James; perhaps Stirling had already begun to grow the protective skin necessary to the health of a public man. Although the *Eliza* had not brought his charter (which, in fact, was not to reach him for several more months), he had received an appreciative letter from the Secretary of State. A happier governor meant a happier colony; James reported the first results.

Since the arrival of the *Eliza* the Governor has in some measure recovered his spirits and health, Sir George Murray having expressed himself well satisfied with the progress the Settlement has made and approved generally of the Governor's measures. £100 a year appointments are now numerous, for instance we have a Government Resident at Guildford, at Kelmscott (the head of the Canning), at Fremantle, the Murray, Augusta and at King George's Sound, besides sundry other appointments, all of which cause money to be spent, ergo are a benefit to the Colony.

The colony was just now plentifully supplied with the common necessities of life at a moderate rate—'but it comes very late'; most settlers' means were exhausted, through having had to pay high prices during the times of severe shortage—times that were soon to come again. The Governor, said James, had judiciously assisted most of the settlers by loans or advances of some kind, and by offering to buy all next year's wheat crop at 15s. a basket. 'This is politic as far as it goes and induces many who were wavering to try it for another Year', but if there were another season like the last, as seemed to James almost certain, still

greater government help would be necessary. Such assistance was no real solution, as was plain.

Another trouble, and one that was getting worse, was the boldness of the natives; James said they now robbed when they could. According to Camfield, thatches were pulled off and sacks and barrels of flour removed through the roof—as a safeguard, he now slept with his meagre stores beside him. The natives also made a practice of robbing boats aground on the shoals above Perth. James described how

A short time ago they attacked Stephen and Camfield who were in a boat by themselves sticking fast on the flats. They robbed them of one or two trivial articles and a loaf of bread but offered no violence. Stephen was unarmed or they could not have ventured so near or come off so easily. Several have been shot but only three actually killed. No person should move without a gun; although they appear at times very friendly they are treacherous and never to be depended upon.

Camfield felt he dared not leave his servant, Mrs. Friend, by herself on the grant, since the natives had killed two of Peel's men. Official steps were being taken to give the settlers what protection there was, the Governor, said James, having 'distributed our *Army* (50 Men)' in small parties to five centres between Perth and King George's Sound.

The Sound was the source of a nuisance less to be expected than native plunder and attack.

Five convicts have lately made their way overland from King George's Sound to these settlements but I am happy to say they are all apprehended and will probably be sent to Sydney. We suffer very much in the Colony from many of the bad characters of Van Diemen's Land coming up here when, finding the laws the same as in England, they care not how they rob and plunder. In Van Diemen's Land their laws are so strict with regard to these men that crimes of this kind are kept in constant check; here we have and can have nothing of the kind and the consequence is that we have the evils of a convict population without the benefits of it.

In the one readable letter by the *Eliza* Thomas must have allowed himself some happy anticipations of making their fortunes at the Swan. At this James expressed his concern:

I regret to find you are still *so very sanguine* and I fear you will not be so well prepared for the alteration in your plans. It is however as

I have before stated useless to deceive oneself any longer; we must act according to circumstances and anyone acting otherwise will find himself so far to Leeward that his whole life will hardly be sufficient to bring him up again. Colonizing is enough to bring any man to his senses: it unveils the mist by which (from the artificial state of things) every man is more or less encompassed in England. It compels a man to think and act for himself.

Once more he appealed to William to do his best to restrain his father's 'extravagant views'.

I truly hope Father will attend to my letters in all of which I have entreated him to save every sixpence. . . . We have no news here except that King George's Sound is now attached to the Colony. Our eyes are however towards Launceston.

THE LATE MISS CARTER

PASSENGERS engaging cabins in the *Atwick* during the latter half of 1830 had no means of telling their Western Australian friends of their expected departure for the Swan; when the ship sailed early in December, James, for instance, did not know that on board was his future wife. News of her coming may have been in those pickle-destroyed letters in the *Eliza*; if so, the soaked pages revealed not a hint. James, absorbed in business, apparently had reason to hope that his younger brother, Edward, might be in the *Atwick*, on his way to help him during the last Fremantle months; but that Charlotte Carter was a passenger he had no inkling until the ship was in the roads. Captain Stirling once remarked to Mrs. Bussell, when they were discussing the affairs of another leading resident of the West,¹ that a girl who would not come out to the Swan to marry her lover was not worth having. Such a venture was certainly a test of the courage, sense, and fidelity of a young lady of that day: Charlotte, for all one knows, may have faced the prospect with trepidation, but come she did. In her case there was, indeed, all the greater need for courage since it is clear that James had not invited her to come; only a certainty of his feelings, and the approval of his family, could have enabled her to take the initiative, as she undoubtedly did. In his letters written before this to his father and to William no word about Charlotte escapes him, unless by implication when he sends an underlined message to '*all my friends*'. But such weak signals seem unsuited to the forthright James; his silence is much more likely to be due to refusal to bind Charlotte before he was assured of success. Charlotte had other views. Her first plan may have been to travel out under the wing of James's parents when they followed him, as was expected, after a year; it may well be that the delay in Thomas's arrangements, of which James learnt by the *Drummore*, decided her to set off for Swan River by herself. In this she evidently had the help of

¹ Probably Edward B. Lennard (Mrs. Bussell, Aug. 1834).

James's family, especially of his mother and William; surely the strongest evidence of known mutual affection between Charlotte and James. Her own family's views are unknown. The daughter, it is said, of a Worthing tradesman, and sister of the Miss Anne Carter so well known as a librarian in that town, Charlotte at the date of sailing was twenty-four.¹ It is known that she had a gentle disposition, a strong feeling for duty, and the sense of humour that James's wife would need. The difficulties and disagreeables of life at the Swan were by now fully known through the press and personal letters, and Morrah, returned by the *Caroline*, had added his own jaundiced version as James had said he would. Despite the depressing picture, or perhaps because of it, Charlotte prepared to leave her native Worthing, her parents, brother Henry, and sisters Eliza and Anne, and cross the sea in charge of the ship's captain to share whatever life brought to James.

The *Atwick*, a ship of 400 tons, had been advertised as early as July 1830, to sail on 1 September to the New Settlement at Swan River and to Batavia, with leave to land passengers at the Cape of Good Hope. Notices of the *Atwick's* qualities and postponed sailing dates appeared in *The Times* at intervals from July onwards for four months—it was not now so easy to fill ships for the already discredited Swan. Described as a beautiful vessel, with lofty heights between decks, a favourite annual trader and the only first-class British vessel loading, she carried arms and a qualified surgeon; testimonials from former passengers to her commander, Captain Hugh M'Kay, could be inspected at Dod's office in Mark Lane. At the end of November it was announced that she was loading fast and that the greater part of her accommodations had been secured by parties of the first respectability. Among these was Captain Mangles, a traveller, author, and amateur botanist and a cousin of Mrs. Stirling; Mr. William Trimmer, of the Army, and his brother Arthur, described as gentlemen settlers as distinct from some on board who were settlers alone;² there was one married couple

¹ Stated wrongly in *Atwick's* papers (*W.A. Arch.*). Her relationship to the librarian appears from the youthful diaries of James Henty's son Henry, 1848–50.

² Perhaps the sons of Mr. Joshua Trimmer, one of England's handful of merino sheep breeders. In 1834 there was a pure-bred merino flock in Western Australia owned by M. McDermott, imported from the flock of Joshua Trimmer (Cox, *Evolution of the Australian Merino*, p. 110).

and a girl of twenty, sister to Colonel Lautour's agent Mr. Richard Wells, and whose age Charlotte must have been glad to note: the rest of the company were men. Early in December the *Atwick* embarked her passengers at Gravesend and set sail.

No picture exists of Charlotte when young. A coloured photograph belonging to the era of her middle age shows a comely face with a wide serene brow and blue eyes framed by bunches of careful curls; a face to trust. Voyages can shatter vows: Charlotte was at sea for twenty weeks with fourteen passengers, eleven of them men, and she survived the test.

The day the *Atwick* arrived in Gage's Roads, Fremantle settlers with their telescopes had fine weather for the exciting routine of spying out the approaching vessel's name. One would like to know how the news of Charlotte's presence on board came to James, whether there had been time for a message to reach him from the pilot or the harbour-master's boat, or whether, half-expecting Edward and according to local custom, he had taken a boat to the anchorage and gone aboard himself for the latest English news. It was nearly two years since he and Charlotte had seen each other: did he come upon her, perhaps a little withdrawn from the ship's bustle, waiting until he should find her and tell her she had been right to come?

Expecting Edward, James had already a home big enough for two; but it cannot have been what he would have prepared for a wife. More than a year before this, James had applied for a villa grant of 20 acres at a pretty spot on the river a mile or so within the heads. Despite the fact that he could 'find no man at Fremantle fit to build a house for a person having the same views' as himself, he planned to set up his home here, not far from where Mr. Leake and other men with families proposed building theirs. The particular river bend that he wished for had been granted to someone else; his second choice, a point of land opposite the first, was refused because that side of the river was not open for location; his third attempt was a request for 'a spot of land' on the coast about a mile and a half south of Fremantle, where there was a conspicuous clump of trees a quarter of a mile from the shore. This was granted him;¹ the home he had built there was probably visible from the *Atwick's* decks. Perhaps, soon after their meeting, he pointed it out to Charlotte, and they

¹ *W.A. Arch.*

looked at it together, with thoughts one can guess; James freshly aware of its shortcomings, but with the knowledge of how much comfort it offered by the crude standards of the Settlement, Charlotte with determination to be daunted by nothing, to see no crudity at all.

The *Atwick* arrived on Monday, 25 April; the wedding was fixed for that day week. Where did Charlotte spend the intervening days? Passengers often remained on board for a short time, so, provided Miss Wells or the married woman did so too, Charlotte may have stayed in the ship. If not, which of the Swan's ladies was hostess to James's bride? Not Mrs. Stirling, seriously ill after the birth of a son; not Mrs. Currie, just settled in her brick cottage at Mt. Eliza, or her diary would have recorded the fact; perhaps the good Miss Wittenoom, of Perth, sister to the Colonial Chaplain: more probably a resident of Fremantle, the wife of one of James's fellow merchants and magistrates, such as Mrs. George Leake. There was still no church at Fremantle; the Fremantle register does not record where the wedding ceremony took place and the bald notice in the *Gazette* says nothing to confirm a family tradition that it was on board the *Sulphur*, then in Cockburn Sound. Stirling, who must have approved of Charlotte for coming out, had offered to give her away but was prevented, as will appear. The marriage was performed by Mr. Wittenoom and witnessed by Stephen Henty, by Charlotte's fellow passenger Mr. Arthur Trimmer, and by Augustus Gilbert, R.N., *Sulphur's* Clerk, perhaps deputed by the Governor to give Charlotte away. Camfield was there; he tells us that it was at the wedding that he received from Charlotte a package she had brought him from his home. At the time, Camfield was too taken up with the occasion to examine his parcel with care; not until later did he suddenly discover that it was a sketch by his brother of the old Burrswood on the other side of the world: there was the fence at the bottom of the meadows, the oak where he had often lain in haying time; the spruce, the box tree and the leaning fir; Pan's garden and the ha-ha fence—he devoured it all, piece by piece. If he had not been so lost in recounting his enjoyment of this bitter-sweet and nostalgic feast, he might have told his sister Maria something of the wedding gathering at which, rather remarkably, the bride remembered to give him the sketch. Since he did not, and

James, in his only letter of the time, ignores that aspect of the day, no description remains.

James's letter was to William, written a month after the marriage, and must have made his mother sigh and perhaps, knowing her James, smile too. 'Dear William', he wrote with steady pen,

Since my last letter per Edward Lombe the *Atwick* has arrived bringing as a passenger the late Miss Carter now Mrs. Henty. Her arrival although somewhat unexpected has I assure you given me the greatest pleasure and I feel convinced that it will contribute no little to my future happiness.

I am happy to say she is quite well and cheerfully submits to the discomforts which our little habitation and other et ceteras entail upon us. I feel grateful to my dear Mother to yourself and indeed to all for the kindness which was shewn to Charlotte previous to her departure and I have no doubt at some future day you will not have to regret the circumstance.

I received a very polite note from the Governor offering to assist at the ceremony by giving her away but his infant child happening unfortunately to die on the very morning he was prevented by that circumstance from being present. He has since called and what is commonly termed 'done the civil' as well as many others. I feel very much indebted to Arthur Trimmer for his good natured attentions to Charlotte on the voyage.

Charlotte finished with as a topic, he passed to other things. He had fully expected Edward in the *Atwick* and regretted very much that he had not come, as his presence would have helped James's arrangements considerably. He gave a heartening account of Van Diemen's Land, received from Sam Bryan, who had returned to Launceston after eight months' absence to find wonderful improvements and a great rise in the price of land; indeed, Bryan had found it somewhat difficult to get a good homestead in the neighbourhood of the town, proving the wisdom of James's warnings to spend no money in England that could be saved for their colonial needs. The whole of their original plan, James said, was 'formed upon a wrong basis and must be altered in toto if we are to do any good, in fact our very existence as respectable men depends upon it'. William, he said, might look forward with pleasure to the time when they would be settled in Van Diemen's Land:

I wish Charles instead of lingering on at that stupid concern at

Arundel would come out (if Edward cannot) he is throwing his time away and either here or at V.D. Land he might be doing some good for himself. It may not be impolitic to have some of our connection here in a mercantile way which makes me very much wish for the presence of Charles or Edward.

He sent his kind love to his parents and to each of the family and added a special message to his mother: 'Tell Mother the preserves per *Atwick* turned out precisely as those per *Eliza*, viz. all spoilt.'

The James Hentys' home was a barn-like structure of two rooms, one above the other, presumably with kitchen and servants' quarters detached, colonial fashion. Their first meal boasted two vegetables—turnips, and turnip tops; their first guest found roast mutton at one end of the table and boiled mutton at the other¹—a feast indeed where salt beef and pork were still the mainstay of every house. Charlotte's larder in later years is remembered as containing an unfailing supply of meats and sweets cooked by Sussex recipes—soused fish and apple turnovers, a special pudding to eat with roast mutton, a special gravy, her own secret, to serve with roast duck; but it is said that in those Swan River days, like many another bride, she knew little of household management and that it was James who showed her how to make her first apple pie.

With Charlotte's coming, James learnt the latest about his father's plans, for she could tell him in detail how things had stood five months before. In exchange, Charlotte herself now heard from James, what was not yet generally known in the Settlement, that he had decided to abandon the original plan. Charlotte knew that, whatever the first intention had been, Thomas Henty's plan now was that the vessel bringing them out should go on to Launceston after calling at the Swan. So much, at least, James also knew, for the possibility of the whole party's continuing in the vessel to Van Diemen's Land had been discussed privately by himself and Camfield shortly before James wrote to his father of the decision to leave the Swan. The modification of Thomas's plan was, obviously, due to James himself. When, in 1830, James had told Stirling that his father would have taken the precaution to provide for an emergency by

¹ Henty family tradition.

chartering a vessel that if necessary would take them all on to another colony, he meant that he had advised his father to do so and knew that his father would take the advice. No, when she arrived at Fremantle, the news that they were to move to Launceston cannot have taken Charlotte by surprise; the withdrawal could not, however, be made at once, and the house, with its view of Garden Island and Rottnest, and the Indian Ocean beyond, was to be their home for the next few months.

KING GEORGE'S SOUND

A FEW weeks before he was to leave for Launceston, James, somewhat surprisingly, made a last attempt to find land good enough to justify his family in settling in the west after all. The attempt was prompted by official activity at King George's Sound. Early in 1831, when Captain Bannister came back to Fremantle after his adventurous walk from the Swan to the Sound, his praise of the country he had passed over revived hope for the colony's success. Surgeon Collie wrote of Bannister's 'gratifying intelligence of rich soil, large but well-spaced trees and bountiful supply of fresh water'; the Governor's object now, said Collie, was to establish a line of settlements across between the two places and to this end settlers were to be allowed to exchange their present grants for others on that route, and might proceed inland either from the Swan or from the Sound, where there was now an officer and a detachment of the 63rd.

The new district seemed to promise plentiful supplies to the meat-hungry colonists; vessels from Van Diemen's Land could conveniently land cattle at the Sound for overland transfer to the Swan instead of battling to bring them round the Leeuwin and to Fremantle by sea. 'The grand point of interest, or attraction, is King George's Sound', said the Government Storekeeper, Mr. John Morgan;¹ he foretold that, because of its reliable summer rainfall, the tide of emigration would flow in that direction and the seat of government eventually be removed there from Perth. Leschenault faded still farther into the background; hope and interest were now transferred from the regions behind the sandy river-mouths of the western coast to the bold headlands and land-locked harbours of the Sound, facing south. James, like many others, hoped afresh: in November 1831 he applied for an exchange of his 60,000 Leschenault

¹ It was Morgan who had been deputed to look after the women landed on Carnac Island when *Parmelia* ran aground in June 1829. He left W.A. for V.D.L. where he was appointed magistrate at Richmond in 1832 (*Hobart Arch.*).

acres for a large grant at the new centre of the Governor's attention, King George's Sound.

As Stirling and Surveyor-General Roe had recently sailed for the Sound and were to remain there for the summer months, James addressed his application to the Colonial Secretary, Peter Brown. His proposal was for two establishments, one in Van Diemen's Land and one at the Sound, with a vessel owned by James to link them both and to enable him to import into Western Australia, easily and cheaply, the sheep needed for effective carrying out of the Hentys' original plans. The proposal was necessarily dependent on the land at the Sound being as good as described. James had already talked the plans over with Brown; he now put them in writing for the information of Stirling.

The principal object I had in view on first coming to this Colony was that of the production of fine wool, for export to England; this object with me is still the principal, and although owing to various circumstances it has not hitherto answered my expectations, I am willing to hope it is yet to be attained. One cause, and that an important one, which has operated against it has been the difficulty of obtaining any quantity of sheep at a moderate rate wherewith to extend and enlarge our flocks.

This difficulty I propose to obviate by having establishments at King George's Sound and Van Diemen's Land co-operating and communicating by means of my own vessel, and I have little doubt in a short time of being able to import sheep at a moderate rate.

My thoroughbred horses are at present a heavy tax on me without affording me an adequate return, and until this Colony be farther advanced I propose keeping them in Van Diemen's Land where I am certain of obtaining for the services of the horses sufficient (over and above the expenses) to purchase flocks of sheep annually.

I propose now to send one of my brothers to King George's Sound with three or four servants in order to make a commencement and prepare for the reception of some sheep; the outlay for which will amount to between £500 and £600 independent of servants. This, with the stock which I shall have, will soon make it a concern of some importance. I am, however, desirous to avoid extensive operations until I have the means of placing a person of sufficient judgment and experience on the Grant to assist my brother who at present is too young to have the management of a large concern.

I have every reason to believe that on my father's arrival in Van Diemen's Land, or as soon as circumstances will permit one or more

of my brothers will be despatched to King George's Sound with sheep. At the same time I cannot lay down any precise plan until my father's arrival, who will of course act according to circumstances, but my firm belief is that he will do everything in his power to form a large sheep establishment at King George's Sound should the land prove equal to the representations which we have had of it.

I have not the remotest idea or intention of forming a temporary establishment at King George's Sound for the purpose of selling the Grant. On the contrary, I am disposed to think from all I can see at present that by a judicious application of funds combined with the experience which I now possess I shall be able to carry my father's original plans into complete effect.¹

James had just become the owner of the vessel he spoke of as an integral part of this scheme, the Calcutta brigantine schooner *Thistle*, 57 tons. Arriving at Fremantle first in September 1830, she had returned to the Swan on her second visit a few weeks ago, after sailing round the Australian continent via Bass Strait, Sydney, and Timor; the supercargo, who was her Swan River agent, dying intestate, her captain put her up for sale and James bought her for £650 complete with chronometer and brass gun.² At the end of November the *Thistle* sailed again, this time for Launceston by way of King George's Sound. Stephen and John Henty were passengers on board. John was to disembark at the Sound; Stephen, after choosing a small piece of coastal land suitable for James's new plan and examining larger areas of the 'interior' for later developments, was to go on to Launceston to secure land there for the Van Diemen's Land base. Besides the 2 Hentys, the schooner carried 6 seamen, 2 passengers, 23 merino sheep, 4 dogs, and 3 pigs; also, for shipment to England, 3 bags of merino wool shorn from James's flocks, said to be the first merino wool exported from Western Australia.

Stephen, in later years described as bold, energetic, almost reckless, was now twenty years old; John, physically not very sturdy, was eighteen; though too young, as James said, to have

¹ F. I. Bray, 'The Hentys at Swan River' (*W.A. Hist. Soc. Jour.*, vol. i, pt. vii).

² Her then master, John James, thought her 'a dear vessel at £650', but nevertheless 'hoped and trusted' to get £700 for the owners, Robert Wilson and Ahmuty of Calcutta, whose Anxious Servant he signed himself. He was unable to extract the extra fifty pounds from James Henty. The brass gun has lent a fierce note to successive Henty homes and now stands in Portland's memorial park.

the management of a large concern, he was to be entrusted with the small beginnings of the venture at the Sound.

Once the *Thistle* was round Cape Leeuwin the few names shown on the chart that she followed were those given by the English sailor, George Vancouver, shipmate and disciple of Captain Cook. Forty years before, coming out of the Southern Indian Ocean, Vancouver had sailed eastwards along Australia's coast, searching for a harbour for the refreshment of his enfeebled crew. Passing white cliffs, clusters of barren islands, high rocky mountain and bare bluff, he had stood at last into port, the first white man to enter King George's Sound. They had followed the shores of naked rock or milk-white sand to a narrow passage overlooked by a high rocky point; from the top of this, two spacious inner harbours could be seen and a wide country, partly forested, of not too formidable hills. Here, naming it Point Possession, they displayed the British colours, drank the King's health, and took possession of all the land they could see and the coasts that they might explore; they named the Sound for King George III and the nearer harbour after the Princess Royal, whose birthday it was. The ceremony finished, says Vancouver, they found a narrow passage into the second harbour, of a more fertile and pleasing aspect than the shores already passed; there, duck and curlew and swan were seen, a small river with many fish, and 'a verdant island' covered with luxuriant grass. Their want of skill as shots and fishermen deprived them of the fresh food they sought for the many sick left in the ship, debilitated by a Batavian fever caught from Dutch soldiers at the Cape; but returning through the passage into the Sound their boats grounded on a bank crusted with a food that could be gathered without art—

Oysters of a most delicious flavour on which we sumptuously regaled; and, loading in about half an hour the boats for friends on board, we commemorated the discovery by calling it Oyster Harbour.¹

In 1798 Vancouver published his account of the discovery of the Sound, together with charts, and described the ceremony on Point Possession and the visit's other events: strange that, in 1826, nobody concerned with the supposed race with the French

¹ *Vancouver*, vol. i, pp. 18-21.

—not General Darling of New South Wales, not Bathurst, Secretary of State for the Colonies—seems to have heard of Vancouver's act. In the despatches and instructions relating to the Sound's occupation it is not mentioned even to be dismissed as invalid, and the Sound is treated as outside British territory, a place to which if necessary we were to pretend to ownership in face of any landing there by the French, and the colours were subsequently displayed by Major Lockyer as though Vancouver's earlier rite of flag and salutation had never been.

It was Vancouver's Oyster Harbour that Stirling recommended to Stephen and John Henty when they arrived to look for land. The *Thistle* anchored in Princess Royal Harbour on 13 December 1831. Stephen went ashore, delivered some letters and 'drank tea with Mr. Roe'. Stirling, with Roe and Lieut. Preston, for the time being in command of the government schooner, *Ellen*, were all at the settlement, occupied with explorations and the first surveys for the town. Stephen heard their accounts of the accessible country and also, then or later, the impressions of Dr. Collie, now Resident Magistrate, and his friend the Scottish settler, Mr. George Cheyne. By now, Stirling had received and answered the letter in which James had set forth his plans; the plan itself must have been discussed between Stirling and Stephen, but there is nothing to show whether the Governor disclosed to Stephen the terms of his reply. Next day, says Stephen's journal,¹

December 14th. Went on shore to Mr. Cheyne's; from thence to the Governor's. Asked him for some land opposite the settlement, but could not have any, it being a reserve, and having been refused to Captain Bannister and Mr. Morley.² John and myself asked to dine at the Governor's; accepted. Looked at some land close to Mr. Cheyne's villa grant; would not do. At 4 p.m. started for the Governor's to dinner. Taken very poorly and had to return, John went. Governor said there was a piece of land on the right bank of King's River which he thought would answer our purpose. We therefore determined on seeing it in the morning.

Seeing it was more than a morning's work; it involved a day's

¹ The journal was one of a number kept by Stephen in a memorandum book now lost. Fortunately while it was still available extracts were published by Noel Learmonth, *Australasian*, 4.10.30.

² J. L. Morley of London, ex. East India Co., arr. 19.8.29 (*III H.R.A.*, vol. iv, pp. 634, 639).

excursion by boat and on foot. 'John and myself went with Mr. Cheyne in his boat into Oyster Harbour . . . landed on the right bank of King's River. Walked over about three or four hundred acres'. The land was a promontory with one shore washed by the river and the other by the waters of Oyster Harbour. Some of it proved to be sand, with sand's inevitable banksias, some was good soil with tolerable feed and 'flooded gum'; in parts, ironstone and granite produced red gum, mahogany, and she-oak; tea tree grew where there were stretches of swamp. Stephen

thought it would answer our purpose better than any other I had seen, although nothing like as good as I could wish. Started back for the Settlement. Very strong current running into Oyster Harbour; could scarcely pull against it. . . . Set sail and beat up, being obliged frequently to let go the sheet. . . . Reached the vessel about 1 o'clock in the morning completely drenched.

Next day (16 December), as he could do no better, he

Sent in an application for 300 acres on right bank King's River, having the same water frontage on both sides. Dined on board the *Ellen* with Preston, with a large party. Told the Governor I had applied for 300 acres. He told me I could have it in the presence of Mr. Roe.

The last words are a hint that Stephen shared a contemporary view—Bunbury's—that Stirling was apt to forget his verbal promises.¹

Stephen's next move was to land the sheep for a few days' refreshment and to transfer John and his goods from the *Thistle* to the King River grant; he was then to set out to look for a larger area that might be exchanged for the Leschenault Land.

December 17th. Moved the vessel round into Oyster Harbour within half a mile of the site chosen for John's house. In afternoon went on shore, looked out the best place for landing the goods, putting the house, etc.

December 18th. Commenced landing the goods. Landed the sheep. I prepared for starting in the morning into the country. Walked over to the settlement . . . called on the Governor. Got the loan of a soldier to accompany me into the country. Returned to the vessel in the evening.

¹ *Bunbury*, pp. 98, 140.

Stephen and his borrowed soldier, with two of the *Thistle's* passengers, spent the next six days exploring unknown country to the north-west. Each carried his knapsack weighing 25 pounds, his cooking pots and gun; two dogs, Jack and Massaroni, were taken along to kill kangaroo for the pots. Stephen's mileage entries are not as meticulous as those of James, but the party seems to have covered about 110 miles, all in rough country except the first stage along the bridle path that was the beginning of the road to the Swan. The journey repeated the familiar story of sand and banksia, ironstone and stunted gums, of patches of good land isolated among wide stretches of indifferent or bad. The second morning, Massaroni killed a 50-pound kangaroo; next day, the party was without water for twelve hours, and the thirsty Massaroni disappeared and was lost. Another day, on the return journey, Jack brought down a kangaroo; at once, two natives, unarmed, appeared from the bush. Made to understand that the white men wanted water, they took the explorers two miles to a water hole and there a kangaroo feast for all took place. On the last day but one, Stephen steered his party for the road to the settlement and they bivouacked by the side of a lagoon. Next day, Christmas Eve, still without Massaroni, they

Started at sunrise following the road; rested at a stream about nine miles from the Settlement and cooked the remainder of our kangaroo. After resting about two hours, we walked one mile along the road, then struck off due east for John's place at the mouth of King's River, which we reached at 7 in the evening, having walked about 25 miles. All of us pretty tired, having made two very long marches.

On Christmas morning John had something to show his brother—the framework of the house was up and boarding begun; also, he had caught a fine fish for their Christmas dinner. On the 26th Stephen walked to the settlement to see the Governor and make his report. It cannot have been an encouraging one. Stirling, urging him to go into the country again, this time offered to lend him a horse. But the *Thistle* could not be any longer delayed; moreover, Stephen felt it was the wrong time of year for exploring—the right season was spring, when there was plenty of water; the *Thistle* would be back in the spring. He could not fall in with Stirling's wish, but he accepted his invitation

to dine that afternoon and records that after dinner he won 18 shillings at cards. That night he slept at Dr. Collie's by the side of Nakina, brother of Mokare and chief of the King George tribe. Returning to the *Thistle* before breakfast next morning, he walked across the point to John's house. John, entertaining twenty-six natives and the Governor and Mrs. Stirling as well, was glad to accept Stirling's offer of a soldier to strengthen his establishment. On that day, too, Massaroni found his way back to the settlement; he was taken on board the *Thistle*, badly knocked up, and with a hole under the ball of each foot.

Now the sheep, improved by their spell ashore, had to be put on board and the *Thistle* got ready for sea once more. On 29 December, at daylight, she left the Sound. John, at the expanding age of eighteen, was left behind, withdrawn from the world, with inadequate food, a handful of livestock, and the company of three employed men. The tip of the promontory became known as Point Henty and is still thus marked on the maps; the name John gave the estate, 'Retreat', has long since gone.

There is no record of how John passed the next nine months in his backwater on the King. Not very strong—his mother described him as 'inwardly weak' and in need of constant nourishment—he may have been glad to be released for a while from the pressure of Stephen's greater vitality and James's greater persistence, to be allowed to begin, gently, to drift.

In Fremantle James now received Stirling's decision (3.1.32) on the transfer of the Leschenault grant. The Governor would make no objection to the proposal, but there was a condition attached: James was to furnish Stirling with a written engagement to place on the future grant at the Sound an amount of property, either in stock or agricultural implements, equal in value to the property that was the basis of the original grant. This was tantamount to saying that James was to make good all his losses of the last two years. That this demand was neither practicable nor reasonable James at once pointed out. It was impossible, he wrote, for him to reproduce the valuable horses and cattle which he had lost since coming to the colony, or to begin again with the capital he had originally brought:

It appears to me if I am called upon to invest a sum equal to the original amount of my property upon which land was claimed, I

shall invest twice the sum any other person has been called upon to do, and which I cannot conceive to be His Excellency's intention.

He conceded, what the Governor had not asked, that there should be a deduction made from property removed (he was taking £1,500 with him to Van Diemen's Land) but not for property lost. When he sailed in a few days he would leave property to the value of £2,310; this sum he guaranteed to spend on a King George's Sound grant within eighteen months:

Beyond this I do not feel authorised to go until the arrival of my father, who, barring accidents, will certainly be here during the summer and who, I doubt not, will satisfy His Excellency on this point and on any other relating to his grants of Land.

James sailed on the 26th of January and his letter awaited the Governor's return: it waited in vain, for there is no record that the Governor ever replied.¹ By now, Stirling was probably a little tired of James and glad enough to leave the matter up in the air, pending the arrival of Thomas; James himself, until he knew more of the quality of the land at the Sound, can have had nothing further to say. The two men did not meet again, for while the schooner *Ellen* was returning from the Sound with the Governor and Mrs. Stirling on board, the *Cornwallis* sailed, carrying James and Charlotte from Fremantle to Launceston via King George's Sound.

A series of pencil sketches made by James as the *Cornwallis* moved along the coast west of the Sound, and some that he drew from within the Princess Royal Harbour, are the only record of his visit there. One labelled 'Albany' uses the name officially adopted for the settlement only a few weeks before (1.1.32) and shows it as a small scatter of huts and tents on a bare hillside. Here, in one or other of these box-like dwellings above the sea's edge, James must have talked with Collie and Roe and Cheyne; must have heard from them of Stephen's journey and departure and of the whereabouts of young John. And without doubt, unless he was able to borrow a horse, he walked the six miles to see John and inspect for himself the 300 acres for which Stephen had applied in James's name. What he saw, and what he learned from others, cannot have accorded with the enthusiastic report

¹ Unless a letter, now missing, from the Colonial Secretary to Stephen Henty, 2.7.32, was a belated answer (*Bray*, note 1, p. 196, above).

of Captain Bannister. By the time the *Cornwallis* left Albany for Launceston it is probable that the area of the Sound satisfied James no more than the Swan, the Canning or the Murray, the Avon or the Collie, and that he was more than ever convinced that his family's efforts must be diverted from Western Australia to Van Diemen's Land.¹

And Camfield? As soon as the Hentys had made their decision to leave for Launceston they tried to persuade him to go too. In grief for the death of his only brother, forlorn in the realization that his family (on his own advice) was not coming out; discouraged by his prospects at the Swan, he yet found it hard to make up his mind to change: like Laura, he shilly-shallied and, using her favourite phrase, said he knew not what to do for the best. In the end, he stayed: he did not 'like the thought of leaving with the Hentys, tho' they wished it—they have from first to last behaved well to me. I have a great value for James'. Still less could he bear to leave before getting the letters from home that were surely on their way. Nor could he think that Mr. Thomas Henty would pass the Swan by. In England the two families had been seeing much of each other; Jane and Edward had been staying at Burrswood; doubtless there had been a return visit to the farm. Camfield clung to the belief that the old gentleman, as he called Thomas, would soon arrive bringing him sore-needed money, as well as news, from home. Until now, hating to accept money from his impoverished family and with a horror of getting into debt in the colony, he had lived entirely on the salt meat he had brought out two and a half years before. He had sold almost all his possessions, even to his stock of pickles, even to a parcel of new clothes sent by his sisters Eliza, Maria, and Matilda. To keep body and soul together, as he said, he had opened a public house on his grant at Burrswood; 'out here', he reminded his family, 'we must not be particular'; his Swan friends thought none the worse of him

¹ The Oyster Harbour grant (Survey Office number, Plantaganet Location 7) was bought from James Henty by George Cheyne some time between 1833–5. Over the next few years the official steps in the transaction seem to have faltered and actually stopped without causing Cheyne any concern, since by then he 'considered the property of so little value' that he 'did not think it worth while troubling anyone about it'. However, some twenty years later he got an offer for the land and wrote to jog headquarters (*W.A. Arch.*). With this the records of this episode seem to end. The area is now divided into pleasant suburban allotments.

for turning inn-keeper, 'for we are most of us keepers of shops of some kind' since 'the land cannot keep us yet awhile'.¹ His journal for January 1832, copied into a letter to his home, notes the departure of

Mr. H. his wife, servants, etc. The Treasury is in almost a state of bankruptcy, my friend Henty and others have left the Colony without their money . . . in consequence of the absence of the Gov^r . . . there is little or no money passing—there can be no payments till he returns.

In February the Governor returned, and killed a bullock for a celebration dinner to the settlers: meat-starved Camfield heard of it too late to go. In March, he says, Fremantle has only six weeks' supply of flour left; in April, 'the people are sadly dispirited—where will it end? . . . If the Hentys do not come soon and bring me some money I shall go hungry'.

Vain hope: the Settlement entered into another period of near-starvation and no miracle occurred to make Camfield less hungry or less poor.

¹ The Colonial Chaplain, the Revd. J. B. Wittenoom, held the same view of colonial necessity: writing to a relative, 24.7.32, urging him to come out as government printer if the Home Government sent out a press, he said, 'You must not fancy that it would in the slightest degree derogate from the dignity of the Chaplain's cousin. There is a press in the Colony but good for nothing, and the printer is no less a person than a Captain Graham who was at one time Lieut. Governor of Sierra Leone. I mention this to show that we are not so particular here, and that a gentleman here never loses his rank in respectability as long as he is employed in an honest pursuit.' About the time that Camfield opened his inn another blow befell him—the death of his man Friend who, 'notwithstanding his rum propensities' had been 'very useful and worked like a horse'. In Jan. 1831, returning up the river to Burrswood after convivialities at Fremantle, Friend had fallen overboard and been drowned. Henty's Bushby was one of the twelve 'good and lawful men of the Colony' who did say that Frederick Friend 'accidentally and casually and by misfortune came to his death and not otherwise' (*W.A. Arch.*). Six months later Friend was succeeded, as both Camfield's servant and Mrs. Friend's husband, by another Henty man, one Barnden. In 1840 the inn and farm were let to him; Burrswood began to be spoken of as Barnden's and the steep sandy hill on which the inn stood is still known as Barnden's Hill (Canon Burton, *Notes, W.A. Arch.; Camfield*).

Part V

REUNION IN VAN DIEMEN'S
LAND

1831-1833



I

FAREWELL, ENGLAND

MEANTIME, at the other end of the world, what was Thomas Henty doing? Presumably, to some extent, heeding the warnings of his eldest son. But before James's cautions began to arrive, while the intention still was to charter a ship, Thomas was able to enjoy informing himself as to the quality of vessels and captains he might wish to employ, discussing these matters by letter with the firms of Henry Buckle & Co. and Henry Dod & Son, or dropping in for a chat at their offices when he went up to Town.

As to captains, he was unlikely to consider sailing with Fewson; Matthew Friend, R.N., of the *Wanstead* James had described as a good-natured man who did his best to make his passengers comfortable but was 'not calculated for the command of a merchantman: very few navy officers are. They can sail a ship well but that is only a small part of a merchant Captain's duty.' Arckoll, of the *Minstrel*, was an honest rough sailor who kept his ship in admirable order, far better than any merchantman James had seen; he would be a very good fellow to have; but 'Always bear in mind it is 19 to 1 you quarrel with the Captain whoever he may be before you get here'. A month later he recommended Captain Lilburn, of the *Egyptian*; Lilburn's passengers had presented him with a silver snuff box as a token of appreciation—'the only instance of its kind in the Colony'. Correspondence with Henry Dod's about flour and other goods to be shipped to James by the *Eliza* brought Thomas

a plan of this ship and an assurance that, despite pressure on the *Eliza*'s hold, space would be reserved for Mr. Thomas Henty's needs in preference to those of all others. Mr. Dod having some time previously sent a young relative out in another of his vessels,¹ the firm and Thomas were able to oblige each other by the exchange of Swan news; the high cost there of provisions and clothing and, because of wrecks in Gage's Roads, the heavy rate of insurance on vessels bound there, were of interest to them both. For some reason there was a delay in offering the farm for sale and the ship question was postponed, a hitch in their affairs that Thomas regretted; he was anxious to be off. Even James's first depressing accounts of the Swan did not much disturb him, and, when Robert Morrah spread through Worthing the expected damaging tales not only of the settlement but of the Henty enterprise itself, in a letter to the *Brighton Gazette* Thomas courteously discounted them as 'much exaggerated'. Throughout 1830 he continued in the face of evidence to hold those sanguine views that so alarmed his eldest son. His mood of confident anticipation probably found support from a visitor of that year, also a medical man, Dr. J. R. Clause, R.N., formerly of the *Success* and one of Stirling's enthusiastic Swan River party of 1827. From that excursion he had brought back a drawing of the idyllic scene of their bivouac on the river, translated into a painting by J. W. Huggins, Marine Painter to his Majesty, and published as an engraving in the *Monthly Mirror* in 1829. Some time in 1830, seated in conversation with Jane Henty, Surgeon Clause filled a page of her album with a sentimental poem to be sung to the air of *Meet Me by Moonlight*: surely evidence of more than one visit and the chance of more than one heartening description of the Swan.

To Thomas's eyes it was not the new settlement and its future that was unencouraging, but the present English scene. To a farmer and banker, as to many other people of middling prosperity and not only to the struggling poor, England was now less and less a happy land. Thomas's letter to James by the *Eliza* was written at the period of great political excitement preceding the election required by the death of the King; James, worried by his own affairs and the troubles of his own community, had been unstirred. Beyond doubt, the subject that

¹ Philip Dod, arr. Atwick, 19.10.29.

failed to excite him was parliamentary reform. In abeyance during the war years of absorption in foreign affairs; revived since the peace; opposed by the throne and in Parliament by most Tories and the reactionary Whigs, who looked to the French Revolution for a lesson whenever hunger or fear of it led to rick-burning and the breaking of machines—Reform, after a decade of growing popular feeling in its favour, was now suddenly the question that agitated every English voter, and more that had no vote. If James had been in the mood to make comments on his father's letter, these might have shown where Thomas's political sympathies lay and how far in casting his vote he was influenced, as most were, by the new revolution that had just taken place in France. In July 1830 the French exchanged one king for another; this time, there was no guillotine, no savagery to horrify Englishmen; not even the most perfunctory interference with the withdrawal of the ex-King to the coast *en route* for England in an English man-of-war.¹ But the brief fighting in Paris had been enough to alarm those Englishmen who saw danger in the proposed widening of their own parliamentary franchise; the concessions to the French insurrectionists, heartening to English radicals, put a weapon into the hands of English authority, a weapon that was ruthlessly used. That autumn the harvest failed again, for the third time; groups of labourers in the rural south, from Kent through Sussex as far as Wiltshire, marched about demanding something above starvation wages and destroying the property of those who refused to pay. Many who condemned this destruction recognized the justice of the demand and agreed to it; struggling farmers, heavily rated to supplement labourers' wages, and approaching extinction themselves, knew without threats the plight of those much deeper in the slough. How did Farmer Henty fare in those ugly days? By chance, his experience was put on record by an outsider, and by further chance the letter recording it has been preserved. Archdeacon Scott, home once

¹ On this voyage to England, lasting six days, Charles X and his son the Dauphin had the company of Commandant Dumont d'Urville and Lieut. Lottin, one of d'Urville's officers on his world voyage. The dethroned King, says Lottin, 'evinced great curiosity in examining the result of our last voyage of discovery. He asked M. d'Urville to relate to him the principal events of the cruise of the *Astrolabe*. . . . Charles X was anxious the next day to ask me many questions regarding Botany Bay' (*Times*, 6.9.30, from the *Quotidienne*).

more, wrote to James Macarthur on 11 April 1831, to describe the England he had found. 'The late burnings', he said, were in a part I am well acquainted with. They arose from the avarice and ignorance of the landholders . . . who while their produce rose refused to raise the wages of their labourers. . . . Mr. Henty in Sussex (now going to Swan River) whilst the farms around him were blazing and the labourers starving and of course riotous, neither was threatened nor lost a man from his estate by any defection.¹

So—Thomas Henty was one whom the French doings had not unsteadied from his customary kindly ways.

In the House of Commons there was some sympathy for the labourers and their grievances, but there and throughout the country sympathy was overpowered by alarm. The rioters found themselves facing arrest by armed troops. Of those arrested 9 were hanged, 400 sent to English jails, and 450 sentenced to be transported to New South Wales, 200 of them for life.² The sentences, imposed by London judges, shocked some of the country land-owners, including some whose persons or property had been attacked; they knew the rioters personally and could not see them as ordinary criminals but only as local villagers led astray. Something of this appears in the account written by a young lady of Wiltshire, Charlotte Wyndham, to her brother George, a settler in New South Wales:

13 January, 1831

. . . The special Assizes took place at Salisbury last week before three Judges, and a great many prisoners are sentenced to transportation. Two are to be hanged, I hear, one of them for having very nearly killed Mr. Oliver Codrington with a sledge hammer in one of the rows in North Wiltshire; the prisoner was not content with knocking him off his horse, but struck him when on the ground, and it was some hours before Mr. Oliver C. could be brought to life, and he remained insensible for two or three days. He is now pretty well recovered, and is extremely annoyed to find that the Judges of the Capital have sentenced the man to death, as he would not allow the Surgeon who attended him to be examined in the Court, fearing that such would be the case, and I hear he has desired the counsel to find a flaw, if possible, by which he may escape. . . . I think these

¹ *Macarthur Papers*.

² E. L. Woodward, *The Age of Reform*, 1815–70, p. 76; the House of Commons defeated by a large majority a motion for a general pardon.

convicts will be most valuable servants to you and other settlers in New South Wales. I fancy they will not be inclined to quarrel with the machines they will find there. . . . Papa has done his utmost to get one of the men's sentences mitigated, but he has not succeeded . . . a blacksmith, the most quiet and industrious young man in the parish. He was absolutely collared and taken out of his father's house by violence; but, of course, when his spirit was up he was active enough, and being a blacksmith he well knew how to break the plows and rollers. . . . I know there is hardly a chance of your seeing poor Edmund White, but if you do, don't forget that Papa has interested himself on his behalf. He has seven years to spend at Botany Bay.¹

When Miss Wyndham wrote, Edmund White had already been transferred from the hulk *York* to the ship *Eliza*, Portsmouth, bound for Van Diemen's Land.² He was to serve five of his seven years before the subsidence of public alarm brought him and his fellow rioters the King's pardon and release in January 1836.³

In speaking of servants, Miss Wyndham used the name, not in the modern limited sense of house-servants, but as of workers possessing one of the many skills needed on a farm, and particularly on the self-supporting colonial properties of the day. She was not singular in thinking that men such as these would be valuable on the other side of the world, and not only in New South Wales: the Colonial Office received at this time private letters urging that the rioters be sent to relieve the labour

¹ *Dinton-Dalwood Letters*, 1827-53 (privately printed).

² Not to be confused with the *Eliza* of ch. 13, pt. IV.

³ Governor Arthur stated that the convicts by the *Eliza* 'seemed to feel more deeply than any other convicts I ever saw the punishment to which they were subjected' (*Clyde Co. II*, p. 469). The nominal roll of these men—246, all transported for acts of rioting—were retained in England until sent to Arthur with the Secretary of State's dispatch of 7.8.35; this dispatch signified 'H.M.'s Pleasure that Free Pardons should be issued to the Convicts therein named except in the cases of any of them who may be undergoing punishment for offences committed in the Colony'. The list shows that Edmund White was twenty when convicted at New Sarum for machine breaking, sentence seven years and could both read and write. In the column reserved for the gaoler's report is entered 'character unknown', for like most on the roll he had spent only a short time in the hulk *York* before transfer to the ship. A few men are labelled 'bad', or as having previous convictions; others are described as 'honest', 'quiet and industrious', 'respectable labouring man', 'orderly in prison'. The pardons were issued in Jan. 1836, and the names published of all except 'ten Individuals who have to complete Colonial sentences before they can participate in the benefits of His Majesty's gracious act of clemency' (Arthur, *Despatch*, 28.1.36). Edmund White was among the men set free (*Hobart Arch.*).

shortage at the new settlement on the Swan, non-penal colony though it was.¹ But it was twenty years too soon for the Government to reverse its original decision that no convicts should be sent to Western Australia: New South Wales—‘Botany Bay’—and Van Diemen’s Land continued to receive all those victims of official terror and the post-war agricultural collapse.

It was against this disturbing background that the Hentys passed their last English year. In April, just after the suppression of the Labourers’ Revolt, the Tarring Farm was let for £500 to the Revd. Peter Guerin Crofts and two others, Mr. Crofts being the owner of much other property in the neighbourhood; he is said to have bought certain of the farmlands and some of Henty’s cottages in West Tarring in the same year.² In September the dwelling itself was put up to auction, with some of the furniture and books, live and dead stock, and fifty well-seasoned elms. The sale was spread over three days. Doubtless it was like all such occasions, endings to chapters of family life: the house saddened by the sound of indifferent footsteps on uncarpeted floors, furniture standing bleak under the appraising eyes of rival bidders and the touch of acquisitive callous hands. One fancies that Thomas, on the first day, was unable to keep away: he had to see who bought his hundred pure merino ewes, offered in lots of ten, and the thirty rams; his grey mare and the two bays; the Alderneys, Favorite, Flower, and Beauty, and the Suffolks, Nancy and Fair Maid—who bought them and what they fetched. One can be equally certain that Mrs. Henty stayed away. The best of the furniture, if James’s advice were followed, had already been sent off, packed for the journey to Van Diemen’s Land; but with James’s injunctions in mind to bring nothing unnecessary there must have been many well-loved things abandoned to the sale—all those mahogany brass-bound chairs with horse-hair seats, enough for the whole family assembled for meals, and more; the Pembroke table from the

¹ The letters were from Mr. James Mangles, father of Mrs. Stirling, and Colonel Lautour, both written in Jan. 1831 (*W.A. Arch.*).

² Title deeds and a declaration on the transactions of 1831 made 12.10.72 by John Barber, malster of West Tarring. From this it appears that in 1872 Church Farm was or had lately been in the occupation of Mr. Charles Peachey; in Sept. 1872 it was transferred by conveyance from James Ingrām and another to Lieut.-Colonel William George Margesson for £18,000. The farm was in existence until the 1930’s when the house was demolished and the land built over (Information, Henfrey Smail).

drawing room; the four-post bedstead with chintz curtains and goose-feather bed; the Spanish mahogany wardrobe where Mrs. Henty's dresses had hung; the blue and white dinner service and copper tea kettles, symbols of hospitality; the butter prints from the dairy, the cheese press, the brine tubs and pickle trays, and other well-used tools of housewifely trades. William Henty, bookish himself, later described his father as a great reader; among the three hundred books offered for sale were travels, campaign histories, popular scientific works, and translations from the classics of Greece, Rome, and France; four volumes of Chesterfield's letters were parted with, perhaps as not being in the colonial mood, and the presentation copy of Wentworth's *New South Wales*—well, it had served its purpose and was now somewhat out of date. In the main, the books were the dross of the school-room and not worth a sigh.

About the middle of 1831, when he was in the thick of preparations for the sale and their departure for the Swan, Thomas received through Dr. Cloves the news of James's momentous decision to leave the West: a bad blow, requiring a complete change of Thomas's plans. His final sailing arrangements were a compromise between his own wishes and the course urged by James; the party were not to travel as ordinary passengers, which James had advised, but avoided carrying the whole burden of chartering a ship by sharing the cost with the Van Diemen's Land Company who were preparing to send stock and settlers to their chief establishment some distance from Launceston at a place called Circular Head. The vessel chosen was the *Forth of Alloway*, a barque of 400 tons just returned from Sydney under the command of Captain James Robertson.

At what stage did Thomas learn of the change in colonial land regulations that was so seriously to affect the Henty fortunes? Land in the colonies was now no longer to be granted free in proportion to the amount of capital brought into the colony but was to be sold to the highest bidder at public auction, the minimum price to be 5s. an acre. The new regulations, gazetted in England on 20 January 1830,¹ passed almost unnoticed in

¹ 'Lord Ripon's regulations . . . were framed to obviate the theoretical and practical evils attributed to the easy acquisition of land; to terminate the prodigality of governors, and the frequent quarrels occasioned by their favouritism; and above all, to prevent laborers from becoming landholders, and the tendency of colonists to scatter over the territories they cannot cultivate. This important change, which

the English press, although they were the culmination of the considerable discussion that followed the publication in 1829 of Wakefield's *Letter from Sydney*. According to Wakefield and his supporters, the old terms were too liberal; large grants created difficulties through too wide dispersion of the population, while easy acquisition (as they thought) of small grants by the labouring class deprived a new settlement of its essential hewers of wood and drawers of water. Perhaps Thomas knew all about the new plan; there was nothing in it to disturb him while, through James, he was a Swan River settler secure in his free grant under the old régime; but when he wished to exchange that grant in one colony for land in another, where grants were now available only for money, and for the highest bid, he was to find that he was asking for the moon.

James's letter urging an appeal to the Government ('properly worded and backed') reached his father just before the sale. Accordingly Thomas wrote to the Colonial Office, but without any attempt at elaboration of the case, and without blaming Stirling and Fraser, as James said should be done—James would have struck a few hammer blows for justice, but compassion was all that Thomas asked. His letter was to Lord Howick, Under-Secretary of State in the administration of his father, Earl Grey, and was written from Tarring on 7 August.

I have at different times sent extracts from my son's letters to the Colonial Office shewing the fair prospects that were likely to arise in the New Settlement at Swan River.

I am sorry to state that letters dated the 1st January last were of a contrary nature and the last dated 12th March were quite desponding. After a Residence of a year and a half the crops upon my son's Grant had twice entirely failed. Two dry summers had convinced him that the Settlement could never be depended on as an agricultural one, under those circumstances he had made up his mind to quit it for Van Diemen's Land.

I have invested a large Capital in my attempt at Success there and having seven sons, besides a Wife and Daughter, I hope your Lordship and His Majesty's Government will take my case into your favourable consideration and give me a smaller Grant in Van Diemen's Land.

excited alarm or exultation in the colonies, was only noticed in one London newspaper' (*West*, vol. i, p. 147).

Either Thomas did not then know of the end of the free grant system or he was innocent enough of official practice and official difficulties to expect ministerial flexibility in the application of rules. Howick's answer evidently enlightened him, but still he hoped. It was now October; he was at Blackfriars with the date of sailing uncomfortably near. He wrote to enlist the help of Mr. Henry Howard, M.P., of Aldingbourne, West Petworth, grandson of the Duke of Norfolk and son of Lord Surry, asking his support in showing His Majesty's Government that his was 'not an ordinary case' and that if they did not think it right to give him land they would allow him to select an allotment, at the minimum price allowed by the regulations, in a particular part of the island known as Ross's Reserve. He enclosed his letter in one less formal with suggestions for martialling all the powers of Sussex to his aid:

From the kind manner in which I have been treated by Lord Surry I think he would favor me with his name and if his noble Father would also do so it would be still more powerful. Sir Charles Burrell and I think Lord Egremont would sign it if you think it necessary as well as Sir Culling Smith Bart. (if in England) and from the interviews I have had with the Duke of Richmond I am very sanguine of his support. . . . I have not a moment to lose.

Evidently Mr. Howard acted—he had shown kindness to Thomas before—and perhaps was able to warn Thomas that Ross's Reserve was to be refused. Before an answer came from the Colonial Office and almost on the eve of embarkation Thomas addressed himself to Howick once more; he did not mention Van Diemen's Land and clearly his object now was to be allowed to keep the door open at the Swan. He had told Howard that he regretted his sons had felt compelled to leave there before their father had arrived and formed his own opinion of the soil. Trusting his sons, he had even more faith in himself; now in his fifty-seventh year, he was not going to accept defeat in the West until he had been to see the land for himself. 'My Lord', he wrote to Howick,

I sail on Sunday next direct to Launceston Van Diemens, and from thence the first opportunity I have, to the Settlement at Swan River, for the purpose of viewing my Grant there—If I find the land unfit for Cultivation, or even for a Stock or Sheep Run, may I be permitted to indulge the hope that your Lordship and his Majesty's

Government will permit me to take other Lands not reserved by the Government or located in exchange for my present allotment?

Although the loss of Crops and the Ophthalmia appears to have driven my sons for the present to Launceston I feel confident that in that Vast Country I shall discover Land not only useful, but productive and fit for Agricultural purposes.

An answer came at once. As to Ross's Reserve—'so much inconvenience would attend the departure in any particular case from the rules laid down' that Lord Goderich was 'under the necessity of declining to authorize' Mr. Henty to obtain an allotment out of the reserves 'upon any other terms than those accessible to any other settler'. Permission, however, was given for an exchange of his grant for any other lands at Swan River if on arrival he should find, '*and if it should be generally admitted*', that it was unfavourable to cultivation or to the feeding of sheep:

but you must understand that this Indulgence is granted you as a special favor in consideration of the large capital which you have invested and the early period at which your Sons proceeded to the Colony and that it will not be made a precedent in any future case.¹

So Thomas and his family were to leave England without definite knowledge of where they were to settle or how their affairs stood. Nor had they the comfort of recent news from the Swan, for the last letters were more than seven months old.

¹ *Henty Family Papers.*

THE FORTH AT SEA

TOWED by the steamer *Albion*, the *Forth* moved from St. Katherine's Dock to Gravesend on 3 November 1831. Charles and Edward were already on board, in charge of the stock and the other possessions, and on the 6th, a Sunday, Mr. Henty joined the ship with the rest of the family—Mrs. Henty, Jane, and Frank, with William to keep them company for the first few days. At this date Jane was twenty-six, Charles and William twenty-four and twenty-three, Edward twenty-one, and Frank, the steeple-tall youngest, just sixteen. In a diminutive pocket-book William mentions the stock carried and describes events between Gravesend and Deal. Thomas had brought 2 blood mares and 1 blood colt, 30 ewes and 2 rams, all from his pure merino flock,¹ 7 pheasants, 2 dogs, a brace of partridges, a hive of bees, Dorking and game fowls, Guinea fowls and 1 she-goat in kid. There were also a man and his wife, without children, and two boys, 'sons of our old shepherd', un-named. There were besides, says William, about 50 souls, men, women, and children, sent out by the Van Diemen's Land Company; 3 blood horses of the company's, 10 dogs, and 2 bulls; also 3 cabin passengers, company's officers, Mr. Wilmore, Mr. Joseph Fossey, and Mr. Mann.² While the ship was still in the river provisions for the steerage passengers were weighed out—the day's allowance of beef and biscuit and a week's allowance of

¹ The number of merinos imported by Thomas Henty into V.D.L. was given as 1,500 by James Henty when sending his father's memorial to the Secretary of State, 29.8.32. Thomas Henty's share in building the famous Scone merinos of V.D.L. was described as follows by James Youl of Symmons Plains when selling his flock to W. Gibson, Scone, in 1854: 'I bought my original pure ewes from Mr. James Cox's pure flock, of Clarendon. . . . I crossed the few ewes I had purchased for five years with a splendid ram purchased from old Mr. Henty, the origin of whose flock was from King George's pure flock, therefore pure Spanish. It was this ram that gave the peculiar character to my sheep which you must have noticed. I then gave them a cross of imported German rams, and again with a ram of Mr. Henty's . . .' (*The Scone Merinos, owned and bred by Messrs. W. Gibson & Son*; published Launceston, 1883. Booklet in possession of Mr. Frank Youl, of Elsdon, Tasmania). Willis of Wanstead also bought from Henty's flock (*West.* vol. i, p. 113).

² The names of the V.D.L. Company's people carried in the *Forth* are given in *Bischoff's Sketch*, p. 143.

tea, sugar, suet, oatmeal, vinegar, and rum. Once round the Foreland they met a head wind; while the steerage passengers were prostrated and the cuddy preparing to be, William straddled the main topsail brace and shot at a seagull. They anchored that evening off Deal in the midst of the Fleet under Rear-Admiral Warren. William slept soundly, spread out on two chests in Edward's cabin, and early next morning prepared to go ashore with the pilot.

Before going a long discussion took place about sending a steerage passenger ashore, whose wife had just come on board. It appeared that the fellow (a couch maker by trade and in good business) had sold off all his goods unknown to his wife and having locked the door upon her slipped away and sailed on board the *Forth*—having such a rogue on board accounted very sufficiently in the opinion of the sailors for our having had a foul wind. When the woman first came on board, the man kept in the background and could not be found for some time, when he was discovered it was with great difficulty he could be got on deck, being loth to face his wife. When he appeared, the meeting was amusing enough, the woman shaking him by the coat for some time and he with his hands in his pockets looking at her with a sort of villainous grin. The fellow would not agree to pay any sum for his wife's passage, and thereupon Mr. Mann pronounced him an inhuman wretch and each of the passengers in his turn let fire at him some wholesome expression mixed with sound crumbs of morality, which however only seemed to make his face look blacker. He was at length with general approbation sent ashore with directions where to receive his passage money—but our punishment and advice were equally thrown away upon him, for in going ashore I understand he declared his intention of going out in the *Sovereign*, which sails in about 3 weeks.

Various necessities and little comforts having been forgotten, William took ashore with him a list of commissions and hoped to find the *Forth* still off Deal when he returned with his purchases.

At $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8 got into the boat with the Pilot, Charles and the other passengers shouting after me orders as long as I was in hail. Counted 9 of the Kings ships lying around us, Admiral Warren's flag flying on board the *Talavera* 74. Passed under the *Curacoa* Corvette, she is painted quite black with a dingy red figure head, and is properly described as a blacklooking devil, she however is a very beautiful vessel.

Paid 10s. to the boatman by agreement—the Pilot paid the same. Father was charged 12s. in the morning for a small parcel a fellow brought on board and in such a case there was no redress, these boatmen that ply to and from the ships charge enormously and you are almost always at their mercy unless you have an opportunity of making an agreement.

Put up at the 3 Kings, the best Inn there though with indifferently good accommodation, pushed about the Town executing my various commissions, to wit purchasing a ferkin of butter for the Steerage, Graves for Dogs, charcoal, biscuits, raisins, nuts, powder, shot, gingerbread, etc. Agreed with the boatman to take me on board and back for 10s. and to bring ashore any of the party paying $\frac{1}{2}$ a crown a head each way. Embarked a little after 9 a.m. on my way to the ship. The Royal Admiral bound for Hobart Town crossed our tracks, she was lumbered as well as the Forth besides having her horses on deck. Got alongside at $\frac{1}{4}$ to 10 my cargo was very welcome on board as there appeared no chance of any other person's going ashore. Figs and another trifle or two were forgotten and Mr. Mann called out from the Poop Hut now have ye brought any soft bread No was the answer, then ye may as well go back again my fine fellow said he.

Wind still W.N.W. but the boatman prophesied a Northerly Wind.

At $\frac{1}{2}$ past 11 bid a final adieu and pushed from the ship intending to send some more things on board if she remained long the Captain purposed getting away at 3 o'clock.

At $\frac{1}{2}$ past 12 landed again in Deal and proceeded up stairs immediately to have a complete wash and purification, came down at 1 and took up a telescope to survey the Forth, found she had sailed and was 2 or 3 miles on her voyage to the Southward, the wind since my coming ashore had got up one point to the north the Captain weighed directly. In 1 hour she was out of sight and would probably be off Hastings by dark.

So William packed up and prepared to leave.

In coming downstairs I was introduced into great Company rather unceremoniously and with so little preparation as to be rather awkward. I had got all my bags and traps in my arms and mistaking my own door I pushed open the next one to it sailing into the middle of it without much warning when I saw a Navy Officer before me looking rather grim at my entry. I sidled out again and in making a leg dropped some of my things which I picked up as expeditiously as I could. I pleaded my excuse but the officer was mum. On enquiring of the waiter who he was he told me it was Sir Thomas Troubridge.

William set off with all speed for Brighton, now his home,

taking the coast road, all new to him and in places as bad as on the Sussex Wealds; approaching Romney it was even dangerous where it ran unprotected beside the groins at the edge of the sea. He slept at Dover and at Hastings and reached Brighton on the 11th. A few days later, letters came from Portsmouth from Thomas and Charles, all well.

Thomas, like many other travellers, began a journal on the first day of the voyage; unlike most, he continued with only one short break to keep it until the voyage's end. The entries were sometimes a mere record of the wind's direction and the position of the ship, but in their four months at sea there were many episodes to interest his lively mind, things seen or done that broke the routine, and these he entered briefly in the little notebook with paper covers, orange coloured and marbled in dark blue. Their first days, still on the coast, were uncomfortable with all the miseries of sea-sickness as the *Forth* struggled with the foul wind, and Mrs. Henty for one was quite prostrated. The horses all tumbled about 'in a shocking manner' and Thomas's mare, Jessie, falling heavily, was pierced by several nails. A man who had hurt himself at Gravesend died from exhaustion after several days without food, and next evening, after the burial service had been read by Charles, the body was slipped overboard in the dark as the ship beat to windward off the Isle of Wight. All this in their first week at sea.

13th Nov^r Sunday, still beating to Windward off the Island blowing hard, Frances suffering very much from sea sickness—took a pilot on board, beating up all night for Portsmouth.

14th. Arrived at the Motherbank at Eleven O'clock passing the Caledonian and other ships of war. The Passengers generally ill from Sickness and very much debilitated—Immediately went ashore at Ryde—sent off to the Ship Bread and fresh provisions for the Steerage passengers, gave those who required it Wine, Brandy, Apples and Grapes, etc.

15th Nov^r From the severity of the sea sickness many of the passengers were so debilitated that sore throats followed out of 5 servants of mine 4 were Ill sent on board Bread and 74 lbs Mutton also fish.

Thomas, no niggardly charterer, evidently took a very human pleasure in being the one to bestow the good things.

'16th Passengers better, thanked me for the Mutton, etc. which appeared to gratify them much.

17th Went to Portsmouth and brought off nearly 100 lbs. of Haik relished much by the passengers who again thanked me for my kindness.

It continued to blow, and was cold, and the mare died from her bruises, but Mrs. Henty was feeling much better and Captain Fotheringham of the *Royal Admiral* and Mr. Ferris, one of her passengers, came on board to dine and sleep. On the *Forth's* second Sunday since leaving the river, still off the island waiting for a fair wind, Charles read the morning service in the steerage and more visitors dined on board.

22nd Received a Van Dieman's newspaper, no news of James's arrival. Accounts in Town from Swan River. Went to Portsmouth bought 2 bushels Sprats for 1^s. the only fish I could get.

It was not fishermen's weather.

Meantime, in Brighton, letters were delivered to William from James and Stephen, still at the Swan. The day before, the frost had broken, there was a south-west wind and little chance of a fair wind for the *Forth* for some time. William determined to take the Swan River letters to Portsmouth and was off by the 'Red Rover' next morning at 8. At Arundel, while the coach halted, he heard that Charles had been seen in the town the day before: presently he 'found the gentleman' himself, waiting for the 'Red Rover'. At Portsmouth 'he had slipped from the ship on Monday, making up his mind to a continuance of the foul wind and came in to Arundel to see his old cronies'. They reached Ryde that afternoon, the 23rd, and

found Edward sitting at the end of the pier looking all forlorn till he spied us—after taking tea together we found the boatman (hired to attend the ship at 15s per day) and reached the *Forth* by dusk.

Edward had gone ashore forlorn but there is no doubt of the mood in which he returned, bringing William, who, says Thomas, 'gratified me much by bringing me letters from his brothers from Swan River—all well and intended starting for Van Diemen's Land in Nov^r. (this month) . . .'. James's April letter, full of disappointment, anxiety, and irritation redeemed by hopeful anticipations of Van Diemen's Land, was one that William brought; another, the one written in May with news of Charlotte's arrival and the wedding. The second perhaps saved James's parents from worrying over the first; in any case

nothing was likely to dim their satisfaction in the thought that they would soon be able to discuss their worries round the family conference table instead of by means of the laborious and incomplete letters of the past two years.

More farewells and a shopping visit to Southampton filled the next three days; William stayed on.

24 My old friend Col. Humphreys came on board to take leave of us—was glad and sorry to see and part with him. Weather fine.

25 Went from Ryde to Southampton with Mr. Wilmore of the Van Diemen's Land Company to buy biscuit supped with the Somers—Wind N.W.

26 Breakfasted with the Somers bt 500 weight of Biscuit and 1 Doz Port Wine for the Steerage Passengers. Got on board at 3 p.m. found my old friend Lieut. Leworthy Lieut. Addis and Mr. Dennis at dinner (glad to see them) Mr. Leworthy and his friends left in the Hawke cutter taking William ashore with him the crew giving us three cheers which we returned.

This time it was really good-bye.

The last paragraph of William's pocket notebook says that the *Forth* was one of more than a hundred sail waiting for a change of wind. The change came on 27 November, the day after he left her at her moorings, the northernmost of the whole fleet. At ten in the morning she weighed anchor and got out through the Needles at two, going at 8 knots. Next evening, three weeks after leaving Gravesend, she passed the Scilly Isles and at last they were on their way.

The reader of Thomas Henty's modest little journal who wishes to pin-point the *Forth's* daily position will find that it cannot be done. Judging by the regularity of the entries, Thomas was free from sea-sickness; but he was no sailor. Although the diary is meant to be a record of their progress and consists chiefly of nautical notes, including the latitudinal position of the ship, her longitude is almost always ignored. To this migrating northerner it was the getting south that mattered, the approach to the equator and beyond it to that far latitude where the ship would turn east to continue along the same line right to the Van Diemen's Land coast. For the first ten weeks, therefore, while the *Forth* travelled southwards, Thomas apparently assumed that she was more or less in that longitudinal lane followed by all ships on the direct route to Australia—a long

steep slant to the lower Brazilian coast and onwards to 40 degrees South: until that point was reached there was, he evidently thought, seldom need to mention the longitude unless she got off her course.

After leaving the Scillies 'with a fair wind and plenty of it' they passed westward of the bay at racing speed, covering 196 miles in 24 hours, and arrived in the latitude of Finisterre on 3 December. Next day, Sunday, a mild day when Charles read the service in the steerage in the morning and on deck in the afternoon, the wind went round; by the evening of the 5th it was blowing so hard that they 'lay to under the Spencer¹ and close-reefed topsail—a very tempestuous night'. Thereafter for eight days and nights the *Forth* was hove to, drifting backwards from somewhere nearly due west of Lisbon to a point seven degrees west of Finisterre, well out of their course. At four o'clock one morning, in heavy weather, they nearly ran foul of a ship; another day the sheep pens gave way, injuring one of Thomas's men, William Hills; many of the passengers, including Mr. and Mrs. Henty, had numerous bad knocks and falls. On the 11th—

A Tremendous Storm at dinner time, took in all but the Spencer, lying to. The Night Dark and Lightening very strong. Rolling too much for the nerves of all of us. The Captain who has been 22 years at sea, said he never knew the wind blow so hard and the first mate says he never had so bad a watch before. Wished my Enemies had been on board, especially that Petty fogging rascal George Mant, and the Hypocritical swindling and base liar Jane Lear.

George Mant was Worthing's town clerk and the Lear and Henty families had long had business links: what had happened, that the kindly Thomas should nurse so bitter a wish?²

After two more days of this misery the wind changed to fair and they were able to make sail. An unexplained gap of ten days in the diary ends when the *Forth* came to the deep blue of tropical waters; on Christmas Day Thomas picked up his pen again, and in appropriate mood.

Dec^r 25 Christmas day Latitude 20–59 Thermometer 76 A beautiful

¹ A small trysail rigged aft of amidships to keep a vessel's head to the sea.

² A James Lear conducted the auction of Thomas Henty's Littlehampton and Leominster estates in 1796 when Henty moved to West Tarring (*Henty Family Papers*). John Street's brother Charles married Sarah Lear (*Pioneer Families*, Mowle).

day. N.E. carrying us on about 8 knots. Run 171 miles in 24 hours. Goose for dinner. Plumb pudding all in high glee—Porpoises alongside.

Off Cape Verde, 'Flying fish seen in abundance, like sparrows disturbed from a Hedge'. Longer runs, rising temperatures, and higher spirits brought them to the Line.

28. Agreed to have Champaign, 4 passengers to pay each 15^s/. 2 bottles today.

29. 2 bottles Champaign today. Lat 9-47 Long 26-11 West Shearing the Ewes today nearly due West of Sierra Leone.

30. Pleasant breese and fine weather. . . . Charles, Edward and Frank *shearing* remainder of the sheep.

This delightful breeze, which Thomas shortly learnt to spell with a 'z', was said to be unusual in these latitudes: 'altogether since the *laying too* (which was bad enough) we think we have been highly favoured. We have an Irish crab on board, we do not mind him.'

In the idle hours of these low latitudes Jane brought her album on deck to be embellished with an acrostic on her name by Mr. Joseph Fossey of the Van Diemen's Land Company ('Take the first letter of every line, 'Twill form a name to me divine') and with verses by another passenger describing the launching of a bottle rigged as a ship and christened *The Lady Jane*; the little beflagged bottle containing a record of the latitude and longitude was 'sped, To try the current's briny course upon the ocean's bed'. On New Year's day

A heavy shower of rain in the morning. Saved enough for 4 days consumption—Intended to have given the Steerage Passengers 2 bottles of Rum but did not, owing to their conduct being bad.

They suffered the almost routine pirate scare:

A Polacca¹ hovering about us for three days, she went out of sight yesterday and this morning was yawing about upon our starboard bow. Some time afterwards she made sail to the Windward and was soon out of sight.

Jany 2nd The Polacca in sight to the Eastward, at 12 out of sight the Captain and Chief Mate have no doubt of her being a Pirate.

¹ A vessel with two or three masts, usually in one piece, and square sails. Used in the Mediterranean.

Casting Musket balls and determined she shall not board us without fighting for it.

The vessel not reappearing, pulses steadied and the next day the *Forth* crossed the Line:

Neptune had his frolics with the sailors and *steerage passengers* only, who were volunteers upon the occasion.

4 Jany. Latitude 2 11 South Ther. 84 fine breese wind SE a brig in sight in the afternoon yesterday, one supposed to be the William Brandt Russion Sloop of War, upon discoveries to the North American coast.

7 Jany. The Man Rogers behaved ill.

11. A shark astern took the bait twice got him up to near the cabin windows, but got off saw no more of him.

12 Jany. The Sun at 12 o'clock is as nearly as possible vertical, latitude 21-30 Light airs but variable Wind East—passed the Islands of Trinidad etc. at 12 last night.

15 Two ships in sight at Twelve spoke the Spartan of Bristol from London 1 Dec^r direct to Calcutta, all well. Sovereign sailed the same day from London.

[Had the erring couch-maker managed to get aboard?]

16 Spartan in company within 300 yards and a French ship on our weather beam about 12 miles . . .

17 Fine weather *Spartan in company* spoke her in the evening and our Captain asked Captain Sanders and his Two passengers to dine with us tomorrow . . .

18 Captain Saunders and Mr. Barton and Mr. Davison came on board to dinner, a very pleasant day with us.

19 Spoke the Spartan, all well.

While the two ships moved along beside each other Jane made a sketch of the *Spartan* in full sail, pasting it into the album between a drawing by William of the ruins of a'Beckett's chapel at Tarring and an acrostic on the name 'Swan River' written the year before by a female friend.

20 The Spartan in company and within 100 yards of us, fine with light airs. . . . My birthday gave the sailors two bottles of Rum. The Spartan hoisted 14 *Colours in Compliment to me*.

Next morning the *Spartan* was six miles to windward and three

days later she was out of sight. For a while, one feels, cheerfulness faded over the horizon with her; for two or three days the sky gloomed and the *Forth's* sails met head winds or flapped in deadly calms; then a favourable breeze was defeated by a strong current that lost them a hundred miles.

But they were approaching their most southerly point. At midnight on 13 February the *Forth's* head was turned to east by south for her passage across the Southern Indian Ocean; on Valentine's Day, anticipating the winds of the forties, they took down the top gallant masts. In the rest of February the only incidents were a meeting with a spouting whale 'as long as the ship', a sight of the *Gilmore*, bound for Hobart Town and Sydney with male convicts, and an unusually clear view of Amsterdam Island. The island was seen one afternoon and was passed in the night; Thomas got up at daylight next morning to see it again, looking on it from a delusive distance with that sanguine eye so well known to James. This uninhabited hump, covered in moss and almost always mist-wreathed, an old volcano haunted by seals and sea-birds, excited in him hopeful speculations as to its strategic and agricultural worth. Thomas

Wished much to have landed on it, it looked prepossessing and not sterile as it has been represented to be, the situation as to climate is nearly the same as the Azores or Western Islands and if productive, that is, if the soil is capable of being cultivated with success, the situation is admirable for ships to touch at for refreshments, going to either of the Australian colonies, or the East Indies, as ships bound to either *generally make the Island if* they can, when bound to either place. The Island of St. Paul is about 50 miles to the South, which we did not see. I think there is a strong appearance of its being volcanic, and the Mound at its top looks like a crater. I should think from appearances the vine would thrive as well as the Climate must be delightful. It is said that hot springs have been found in this Island where fish may be boiled as soon as taken. This may be so, and yet other parts of it may be good for Cultivation, and productive.

March winds now blew them swiftly to their journey's end; for days under shortened canvas they travelled at 10, 11, even 12 knots. On the 10th, briefly, the *Forth* was in the longitude of Swan River, where Henry Camfield, burning off his grant, was thinking daily of the Hentys and, much as he longed for their arrival, hoping that 'for the look of the thing' the grass would

WEST TARRING.

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**LIVE AND DEAD FARMING
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Pure Merino Flock,
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ABOUT
50 ELM TREES,
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WHICH WILL BE
SOLD BY AUCTION,
BY

MR. LASSETTER,

On the Premises,---by order of Mr. Henty,
On TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, & THURSDAY,
The 27th 28th and 29th of September, 1831,

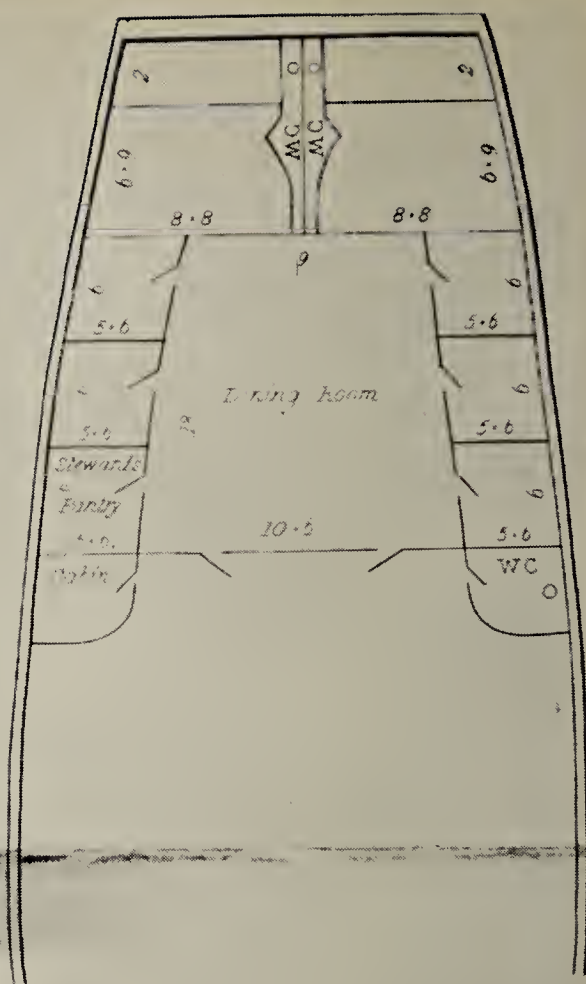
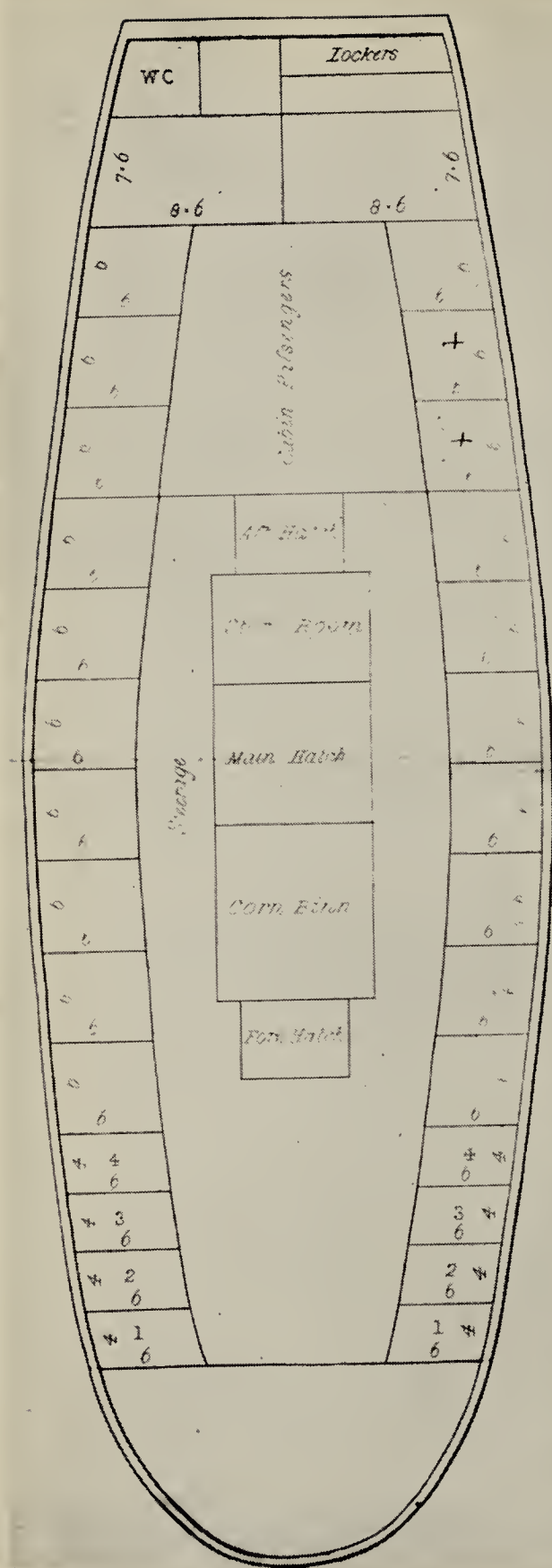
Consisting of 2 bay saddle mares, 1 useful cob and pony chaise, 3 Alderney cows in milk, 2 suffolk cows, from the Stock of Sir Charles Burrell, Bart.; and 1 ditto yearling bull, 2 suffolk calves, 100 pure merino ewes, and 30 very superior merino rams, 3 good sows with pigs, 1 boar, 12 fat hogs, poultry, &c.; 5 waggons, 5 carts, 1 water ditto, 1 heavy roller, and 1 light ditto, 2 winnowing machines, sowing machines, horse hoes, ploughs, 1 double and 2 single drag harrows, 10 small ditto, lead trough for liming wheat, iron and other water troughs, oak cribs, wattles, ladders, 1 stubble rake, rakes, ropes, and small implements of husbandry.

The Stock will be sold on the first Day.
The Household Furniture and Brewing Utensils on
the Second Day.

The Books and Timber on the 3rd Day.
*Catalogues to be had at principal Inns, in the Neighbourhood; at the place
of Sale; and of the Auctioneer, Worthing.*

The Sale to commence at 11 o'clock each day.

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SHIP FORTH
 A 400 Tons
JAMES ROBERTSON, COMMANDER
 Lying in the
ST. KATHARINE DOCKS
 FOR VAN DIEMEN'S LAND

J. Croft Sc 18 Holborn

25. PLAN OF THE SHIP FORTH

have sprung green before they 'came in'. After the 12th, pricked by impatience, Thomas troubled himself with latitude and longitude no more: Van Diemen's Land was too near. On the 21st in fine weather they anchored off Circular Head.

Their arrival was known in Launceston thirteen days afterwards. Probably the news was carried overland, by the bridle-track first made by their voyage companion, Joseph Fossey, that, crossing plains and rivers and skirting rugged mountains, linked the company's establishment with the settled areas farther east.¹ The *Forth* stayed nine days, disembarking the company's stock and indented servants—the carpenters, the Oxfordshire masons and Buckinghamshire bricklayers and the shepherds from Scotland, Norfolk, and Wilts., all hoping for a miraculous new life and all indented at much lower wages than the people they replaced.² The Hentys were entertained to dinner by the manager, Mr. Edward Curr; they rode the plains, inspected the stock—'all good and in excellent condition', said Thomas—and shot quail; delightful parties and delightful days. Then on 31 March the *Forth* sailed for Launceston with a fair wind.

¹ The terrible character of the country faced by the company's surveyors, including Joseph Fossey, is described by K. von Stieglitz in *A Short History of Circular Head*, pp. 32-37.

² *Bischoff's Sketch*, p. 143.

FAMILY GATHERING

WHEN Stephen arrived at Launceston in the middle of January 1832 he learnt for the first time that Crown Lands in the Australian colonies were no longer to be given away. The news had startled Van Diemen's Land months before, and Sydney soon after that; but as no vessel sailed for Fremantle from either colony during the latter half of 1831—the westerly winds saw to that—the Swan knew nothing of it until November brought official word direct from England. At this time, Stirling was absent on his visit to King George's Sound and the papers had to be sent on to him. The *Thistle*, with Stephen on board, sailed a few days after their arrival and, had Stephen but known, he himself was the carrier of the new instruction and other documents, including the Governor's long-awaited commission, on the last stage of their eight months' voyage.¹ Before these communications reached the Governor's hands all Perth and Fremantle knew that something important was on its way; rumours of some of their contents, though not of that one relating to land, were actually published in Perth the day before the *Thistle* sailed. Stirling at the Sound appears to have been more discreet than his officers in Perth: obviously there was no talk of such matters at the Albany card party, or Stephen's journal would have recorded, not the winning of 18 shillings, but the losing of all prospect of a Van Diemen's Land grant. The principle of the new regulations cannot have disturbed Stirling, who privately favoured the sale of colonial lands, as was done in America;² but his representative at the Sound, Dr. Collie, hearing of the new system from his chief, considered it as an unbearable load for the settler. The Secretary of State, Lord Goderich, with the best intentions towards the small settler but with no first-hand knowledge of the difficulties of any settler, small or large, described it to Governor

¹ The despatches reached W.A. by the *Jolly Rambler* via the Cape, 18.11.31, and were taken on to K.G.S. by the *Thistle* (*Western Australian*, 26.11.31).

² Stirling to Goderich 20.1.30, and Goderich to Stirling 28.4.31 (*W.A. Arch.*).

Arthur as a simple and easy measure to prevent the occupation of land by persons unable or unwilling to improve it: but it was a matter of consternation to settlers able and longing to clear, fence, plant, and stock land if they could only get land that would reward their work.¹ Stephen's dismay at the news that met him when he landed in Launceston is a matter of family tradition to this day. Although the first warning to suspend further grants had reached Arthur in May 1831, and was followed in a few weeks by full instructions and the new terms, the necessary regulations were not published until late the following February, some weeks after Stephen arrived. Goderich said he was sure Arthur would welcome the abolition of a system that must often have caused him some embarrassment and inconvenience owing to the difficulty of adjudicating between rival claimants for the same land: in the view of many, in his own time and at the present day, Arthur had not allowed the system to cause him any inconvenience whatever; he had his own way of distinguishing between the claims according to the acceptability of the claimant to Arthur himself.²

At Swan River the problem of the changeover was certainly simpler than in the older colony. Stirling had his regulations ready and published several weeks before Arthur published his; even if James had had no earlier unofficial information, he must have realized from the *Fremantle Gazette* of 30 December that new difficulties, and not only new opportunities, awaited him and his family in transferring to Van Diemen's Land. At the end of February, four days after the regulations were published in the *Hobart Town Gazette*, James and his wife arrived off the mouth of the Tamar with the Bushbys and their three children, the Hills and two children, and Sandfords with their five, two

¹ Goderich to Arthur, 28.1.31 (*Hobart Arch.*). Writing in June 1832, Camfield says 'Lord Goderich tells us we must be more concentrated and live in towns and villages—how armers are to farm in a seaport town I know not if his Lordship does—and telling us, after we have been out here nearly three years, is cool enough. I wish the considerate gentleman would be good enough to send us a few pence to defray our expenses. . . .'

² *Kathleen Fitzpatrick*, p. 99. *West* says Arthur 'manfully employed the last hours of patronage' (vol. i, p. 147). After receiving the new regulations in May 1831, and up to the end of 1835, Arthur made free grants totalling 61,593 acres. In May 1836 the cases were all reported by Arthur to the Secretary of State, on request, with full details of acreage, reasons for departing from the regulations, &c. (*Hobart Arch.*).

other men, Jane Steward, who was probably a house servant, together with the remaining stock.¹ Charlotte was ill after a miscarriage at sea, due, it was supposed, to a fright when a Lascar fell into the cabin through the skylight open to the deck above; she and James must have been impatient to be done with the last part of the voyage, the slow approach to Launceston by more than thirty miles of river winding, sometimes treacherously, through the valley's thickly wooded flats. The George Town pilot was, it seemed, impatient too, for he took the *Cornwallis* in before the tide had risen, grounding her where the malachite deeps shoaled too quickly to pale green and to buff. From the next issue of the *Cornwall Chronicle* James got an early taste of the bitter flavour of Launceston's press; the official neglect of shipping facilities in the Tamar was just one of a number of the north's grievances against Arthur, accused of favouring Hobart Town, the River Derwent and, generally, the Island's south.

They arrived towards the end of a summer so dry that many of the mills had stopped for want of water and when Launceston's inns were crowded with neighbouring landowners who, drought or no drought, had come in for the races. A fortnight earlier the town, it was said, had been cast into gloom by the news of the rejection of the Reform Bill; according to the *Advertiser*, people had been able to talk of nothing else. Now, conversation was no doubt devoted pleasurably to 'form', when it was not of the want of rain. Coming from the far worse drought in the makeshift hungry West to a town of many stone buildings, cottage gardens reminiscent of England, solid-fronted banks and busy wharves, a town boasting two newspapers and a parish church with a tower, not to mention a race-course that would increase the value of Young Wanderer, James must have been stirred with pleasure at having made the move. Stephen and the *Thistle* were already engaged in trade, and James lost little time in establishing himself as a merchant; for the farming

¹ John Chipper was not available to go with James; no longer employed by Henty, he was working at Guildford at his trade of carpenter and doing well, eventually buying Camfield's Helena River property, Clayton. A few days after Henty left the colony Chipper was attacked by natives at Greenmount on the York Road and severely wounded; the name Chipper's Rock commemorates the episode, marking the place where he leapt to safety. His companion, fourteen-year old Reuben Beecham, of Barnham, Sussex, was killed (*W.A. Arch.*).

part of the venture, with its fresh problem as regards land, he awaited the arrival of his father.

Until he had been in Launceston seven weeks, James probably knew no more of this arrival than that it must be soon; then no doubt he heard from Thomas at Circular Head. On 4 April 1832 the *Advertiser* published the news that:

The *Forth* from England, with the celebrated sheep breeder Mr. Henty and his establishment on board, has arrived at Circular Head. As a grazier, Mr. Henty was considered to rank only second in England; we may therefore justly expect an acquisition in that gentleman.

There was still no road from Launceston to George Town, at the Heads; apparently James and Stephen hastened down the river in the *Cornwallis*, bound once more for Swan River, and were put aboard the *Forth* at three in the morning of 3 April. Nobody has left a record of that meeting when the Henty family were re-united in the light of a ship's lantern long before dawn; unaccountably, Thomas's journal does not speak of it at all, but Camfield learnt the bare fact of it from the *Cornwallis*'s captain, who had accompanied the brothers aboard. In this manner Camfield's expectation of seeing 'the old gentleman' at Swan River was finally quenched.

But the *Forth* had not yet reached Launceston. Unimpeded by storms she had crossed the oceans only to be delayed at the river's mouth by etiquette. After leaving Circular Head she had found herself travelling in company with Mr. Henry Reed's *Socrates*, also from England, and out exactly the same number of days as the *Forth*. Apprehensive that there might not be two pilots available at George Town, the ships had raced for first place and the *Socrates* won. True enough, there was only one pilot; he took the first comer as far as 'Mr. Stevenson's bend' and returned for the waiting *Forth*. Meantime, however, Lieut. Preston, R.N., had arrived in the schooner *Ellen*, tender to H.M.S. *Sulphur* and sent by Stirling in search of that ship, seven long months absent fetching food for the hungry Swan.¹ The

¹ 'Sailed this morning H.M.S. *Sulphur*, Captain Dance, for Swan River, with 50 tons of flour, 1000 lbs of tea, 6 tons of potatoes, 100 bushels of wheat, 100 do. oats, 100 do. barley, 1000 onions, and 100 casks Irish salt pork for the use of the settlement—besides a large supply of articles of colonial produce for the ship's use, to last for six months' (*Hobart Town Courier*, 31.3.32). The *Sulphur* eventually

little *Ellen*, being a naval vessel, had precedence over the *Forth*; what was Captain Welch, the port officer, to do? Lacking a pilot, he put the pilot's brother on board the *Forth* and took the *Ellen* himself. The dilemma was serious: either a King's vessel, or the largest merchant ship ever to visit the port, had to be committed to the care of one whom the indignant Captain Robertson dubbed an 'unlicensed waterman'. Since he had to offend someone, Captain Welch preferred that it should not be the Navy. Robertson's annoyance melted when the situation was explained, but he expressed surprise at the lack not only of pilots but of signals and other facilities essential for a trading port. The *Advertiser* agreed with him; in the next issue the 'shameful want of convenience in the River Tamar' was again pointed out as another instance of neglect of the north by Governor Arthur and his officials, who lived and functioned in the favoured south. For the Hentys, moving up river at last on the 6th, it was early evidence of the standing grievance of their new home.

They arrived at dusk and landed next day, going to a house described by Thomas as lately occupied by Dr. Browne, the chaplain of St. John's. With James and his household they formed a large group; even without William, to remain a few more years in England, and without John, still for a few more months at King George's Sound, they were a family party of nine; in addition, they had thirty servants, and the servants had ten children or more: altogether forty-odd persons to be housed, fed, and kept content. The very day after the *Forth's* arrival a country property a few miles from Launceston was advertised to let; the description sounded tempting, as such descriptions do:

All that desirable Farm called Cormiston situated on the west bank of the River Tamar within four miles of Launceston, consisting of 2000 acres of excellent lands, 300 acres of which are at present in a high state of cultivation; there are four paddocks of 100 acres each, & almost the whole is fenced in, and a sufficient quantity of stuff split for completing the outside line. Also a Garden and orchard of

reached Fremantle on the 4th of June, nearly three weeks after Preston in *Ellen*. Camfield's letter of that month reflects the local indignation at the long absence of Dance, whose apparent indifference to the settlers' hunger was the cause of a serious dispute between him and Stirling. Shortly afterwards the Governor and his wife and family sailed for England in the *Sulphur* and the dispute was continued by correspondence on board (*W.A. Arch.*).

about five acres, well stocked with Fruit Trees; 25 Working Bullocks, and Farming Implements of every description, and about 150 Head of Cattle, 40 of the Cows broke in to Milk. A Dwelling house, consisting of eight Rooms, with detached Kitchen, Servants' Room, Wash House, Dairy and Stable, all in thorough repair. Also, an excellent Barn, Granary, and House for the Farm Servants.

Inspection satisfied the Hentys. The long low house was of wood, but its double walls were brick filled; French windows opened on to a flagged verandah; there was a wide view over the river to the hills rising from the valley's opposite side, and far to the right was the bold blue line of the mountains called the Western Tiers. Today much of that view is hidden by laurels, a giant pear, a cork oak, and other large trees that could have been striplings when the Hentys lived there; the first dwelling, now unused, is neighboured by a two-story house, itself a century old. A French window in the first house is gone where, only twenty years ago, could be read the name 'Henty' with a date scratched beside—young Frank probably the scratcher, and the tool a diamond borrowed from his mother or sister Jane. There must have been plenty of work on Cormiston's two thousand acres for both Frank and Edward, who wanted to be farmers and were untrained for anything else; Thomas's idea of leaving Frank at the new London University had probably been scotched by Mrs. Henty or by the boy himself. Charles as a business man, soon to return to banking, and Stephen as a budding trader from Launceston to other parts, had to find a roof in the town itself; perhaps it was they who lived for a while in the neat little wooden house in Bathurst Street known for many years as Swan River Cottage, brought out in frame by one of the Hentys and erected in Launceston instead of at the Swan as originally planned.¹ James and Charlotte lived in the beginning in Cameron Street, in a house rented from the merchant, Mr. Lord. This was close to James's first store, possibly the shared premises of his friend Samuel Bryan overlooking the shipping pool and wharves. As soon as he got the necessary land James began to build his own store and a house for himself and Charlotte alongside. The power to make large land grants had been taken from the Governor, but small town allotments were still in his gift. Very soon after landing,

¹ Demolished in 1878 (*Button*, p. 139).

James went to Hobart to ask Arthur for half an acre in Cimitière Street, on a block otherwise reserved for a market square, public buildings, and the Scots church. It was a strenuous ride of 140 miles to Hobart Town and meant three nights in village inns along the way. He returned with Arthur's verbal promise of the site he wanted, 'His Excellency', as James told Surveyor Thomas Scott, 'having been pleased to express his willingness to facilitate my views in procuring an allotment in order to afford employment for my numerous Free servants'. The formal application, travelling backwards and forwards between Launceston and Hobart, between the Surveyor and Surveyor-General, was approved by Arthur on 28 April: James, at great expense while his servants were idle, set to work at once. And then His Excellency changed his mind. He suggested that Mr. Henty be asked to exchange his half-acre for another in the same street. This matter—small except to James—involved Scott, the Launceston Surveyor; George Frankland, the Surveyor-General, in Hobart; John Burnett, the Colonial Secretary; John Montagu, the Governor's private secretary; and Arthur himself. James, who had already spent £50 on his site and had no mind to fill up excavations dug for brick burning on the other, wrote a courteous letter of protest and made another visit to Hobart Town to put his view of the case. Minutes written on the back of his letter exhibit a governor in cold pursuit of lost papers and a flustered colonial secretary in self-defence. The papers, with a little sketch, were found; the matter was considered by the Governor-in-Executive-Council; the Council could see no reason for removing Mr. Henty: the half-acre remained his.¹ The store he built on it and the house beside it are there today, opposite the premises of the present-day family firm.

James and Charlotte called their house Grant Staples. Through a single cast-iron gate with a lantern suspended above, the paved path led past detached servants' quarters with barred windows on to the street, along the side of the house to a verandah stepped high above a garden sloping to the lower fence and government reserve; low-silled windows opened on to the verandah from two large well-proportioned rooms; a

¹ *Hobart Arch.* One of Button's boyhood recollections of 'primitive Launceston' was that Henty & Co. had 'a kind of landing stage for their whaling ships abreast of what is now Gunn's saw-mill' (*Button*, p. 136).

narrow stairway led to the attic rooms above, nurseries for a young family that grew to five in number; felt-padded double doors divided front from back, muffling the rattle of saucepans and the clatter of kitchen quarrels and jokes. In this solid abode James was able to provide Charlotte with the comfort and dignity that he must have felt was his wife's due and that it had not been possible for him to give her at Swan River. In building Charlotte's drawing-room—marble mantelpiece, panelled doors, gold pelmets and all—within a few feet of the business that made such trimmings possible, he showed his straightforward common sense. Store and house were in the business quarter of the town, within a stone's throw of the wharf where ships chartered by James unloaded hardware and slop-clothing, gunpowder, farm implements, and building materials from England, and sugar, tobacco, wines, and rum from Brazil, Mauritius, and the Cape. From these wharves he dispatched wheat and wattlebark and wool; later also seal-skins, whale-bone, and oil, from his own wharves and often in his own ships. All this was still to come; but it was reached before long.

HUMBLE MEMORIAL OF THOMAS HENTY

JAMES had brought £2,000 with him from Swan River, enough to establish himself as a merchant. Thomas, too, had brought £2,000, but to turn the Hentys into landowners, their primary aim, now that they had to buy their land that sum was far from enough. Despite the regulations, despite recent rebuffs, they decided to appeal again for a grant in Van Diemen's Land in compensation for their losses at the Swan, the grounds of appeal being that had they not been misled by the Home Government they would have come to Van Diemen's Land in time to acquire a free grant of land on the old terms.

Even in these days it is not unusual to seek the help of influential friends; in the eighteen-thirties it was the recognized, indeed the only, way to get your claims heard. As a result of James's urgings from Swan River, William had already been busy on his father's and brothers' behalf, calling on friends, writing letters to officials, but all to no purpose. Immediately after this failure a memorial from Thomas himself arrived at the Colonial Office with a sympathetic covering dispatch from Arthur, and the influential friends all set to work again. There is a family tradition that before framing this memorial Thomas mounted his best black horse and rode to Hobart Town to put his case before the Governor: there is nothing unlikely in this; in fact it is probably true, even to the colour of his horse, all but one of the Egremont horses sent to the Swan, both colts and fillies, being listed in the Stud Book as black. At that time, too, the ordinary way to travel the rough road between north and south was on horseback, there being as yet no stage coach, though a month or so later the enterprising Mr. John Cox began running a tandem, with room for one passenger only, at a charge of £5 for the single trip. It was advertised as a cheap and safe conveyance, to leave Hobart at eight o'clock on Monday mornings and arrive in Launceston on Wednesday afternoons at three, leaving for Hobart again next day. Mr. Cox, who particu-

larly requested 'the support of Bankers, Solicitors, Merchants and Traders', undertook to carry small parcels and to perform each journey himself. The *Advertiser*, reporting his arrival after the first journey and his departure on the return trip next day, added that

Such is the notorious state of the roads, however, that no one was found who had sufficient temerity to accompany him on his first trip; the vehicle was therefore light, the horses fresh, and the journey consequently performed without accident. We sincerely wish Mr. Cox may make his spirited speculation answer, but we fear our ways need much more improvement than is likely for some time to take place ere such an undertaking will prosper.

Despite this pessimism, the condition of the road, and the threat of attack by the bushrangers that menaced the midlands of the Island, the tandem was soon succeeded by a proper stage coach so regular in its passing that settlers within hail of the road used to set their watches by it.¹ In Thomas Henty's first Launceston months, however, and at the time when the business of his memorial took him to Hobart, he probably found it cheaper, safer, and more comfortable to ride.

The memorial, dated 29 August 1832, set forth the circumstances of the family's first migration plans and their changed destination

in consequence of the Government Notices which were issued from the Colonial Office in the latter part of 1828, and in 1829, respecting the Settlement in Western Australia, and the flattering description of the Country given by Captain Stirling and the Colonial Botanist of Sydney, Mr. Fraser, in their published reports;

it enumerated the stock brought and lost and went on to the decision to abandon the Swan River grant and the astonishment and dismay of Stephen at learning of the changed regulations when he arrived in Van Diemen's Land.

Your Memorialist humbly states that from his excessive losses at Swan River he is not now enabled to procure Land in this Colony under the present Regulations, by Purchase; and although he is in a condition to Farm and Stock a considerable quantity of Land, having brought a large quantity of applicable property for that pur-

¹ *Laun. Adv.* 23 and 30 June 1832. Cox's death in 1837 was attributed to 'his unremitting personal exertions in the conduct of his stage-coach and mail undertakings' (*ibid.* 26.10.37).

pose, he cannot do so if he is obliged to part with his reduced Stock of Money in order to obtain his Land.

Your Memorialist humbly submits that the fact of his bringing to this Colony upwards of thirty free Servants, and four descriptions of improved Stock [horses, cattle, and two breeds of sheep, South-down and merino] has contributed materially to improve the condition of the Colony as regards its labour and productions and that for similar acts Grants of Land of various extent have been given (and deservedly so in the opinion of many settlers and well wishers of the Colony) as an encouragement to the introduction of free labour, and an improved description of Stock.

Your Memorialist therefore humbly prays that his severe losses at Swan River, and the time that was so injudiciously spent, in that Settlement, may not be allowed to operate to his prejudice in this Colony, and that your Lordship will be pleased to take into your gracious consideration the propriety of permitting him and his family to be placed upon the same footing with regard to Land here, as they would have been, had your Memorialist followed his original intention of coming to this Colony instead of Swan River, so that he and his family of seven sons may receive Land free of Quit Rent in this Colony in proportion to the amount of Capital they have now imported, under the System of the Old Regulations. And your Memorialist as in duty bound will ever pray. . . .

Very likely Thomas got no nearer to Arthur than to his private secretary; but the carefully sympathetic flavour of Arthur's despatch suggests that he himself may have seen Thomas and found him likeable, as everyone did. Arthur wrote that it was 'impossible not to feel interested in his behalf'; all the circumstances 'strongly induce me to recommend him to your Lordship's favourable attention'; but he was bound to say that there were many others pressing their claims, who doubtless felt them equally strong.¹

Even if Arthur's support had been much more emphatic it would not have swerved Lord Goderich from the path of rigid adherence to the New Regulations. Friends of Thomas, his former fellow magistrates and neighbours, members of Parliament to whom he was known, His Grace the Duke of Richmond, Lord Lieutenant of Sussex—no persuaders, however urgent or exalted, could prevail. Exactly a year later Thomas was informed by the Colonial Secretary that the Governor 'regretted

¹ Arthur to Goderich, 31.8.32 (*Hobart Arch.*).

exceedingly Lord Goderich has not felt himself under existing circumstances, at liberty to accede to his request'.

So Thomas had to content himself in the meantime with renting additional land, a property of 1,000 acres called Red Hill on the east bank of the Tamar;¹ but his instinct was for ownership and he was not content for long.

¹ Advertisement in *Independent*, 17.11.32. Red Hill belonged to C. Barnard. The Hentys lived at Cormiston until the return of its owner, Archibald Thomson, from Scotland early in 1836 with an ailing wife who wanted to go back to her own home. The Thomson descendants at present living there possess an old Cormiston account book with names of assigned servants and cash or clothing issued to them, notes of stores, fencing, &c., between Jan. 1829 and 1837. Much later references to Red Hill suggest that it, or another area beside it, became Henty property.

JANE MARRIES

EVEN if there had been money to buy it, there was now little unoccupied good land to be bought. Newcomers to Van Diemen's Land must have been surprised to learn that except for the wide valleys of the North and South Esk rivers that united to form the Tamar, and the valley of the Derwent in the south, almost all the island was covered with dense forest and tilted into craggy hill and wild mountain range, leaving little fit for agriculture and the grazing of sheep. Until the early twenties Van Diemen's Land was almost entirely a station for prisoners and their guards, military and civil, and it remained a dependency of New South Wales until 1825. From 1823, with a completed road from north to south, free settlers began moving northwards from Hobart Town and southwards from Launceston along the valley swathe east of the island's centre; the settlement along this passage way was broken in two places—by the arid Epping Forest, haunt of bushrangers, and by the reserve for government cattle that for so long excluded settlers from much of the rich area round Ross. In the north, the fertile stretches bordering the two Esk rivers were by 1830 nearly all allotted in free grants or bought by those grant-holders as additions to their estates. One of the men established there early was James Henty's friend Samuel Bryan, described by Camfield as a farmer in a large way. He had arrived from Ireland in 1822, had received a grant of 2,200 acres in the Morven district on the South Esk, nineteen miles from Launceston, and other properties near by.¹ On 16 October 1832, when he was thirty-eight, Jane Henty became his wife. The marriage linked the Hentys to a fiery trio whose warfare with Governor Arthur is a matter of Tasmanian history. Sam had the injudiciously fluent tongue of his country and—as his wife liked to mention—was a graduate of Dublin University; both things probably made him good company and he was able to

¹ *Hobart Arch.* Sam Bryan was officially recommended to Governor Sorell as a settler in 1822 (*III H.R.A.*, vol. iv, p. 47).

give Jane a good home. They were married under the Cormiston roof by the Revd. W. H. Browne, chaplain of St. John's, Launceston, the witnesses being Jane's father, her youngest brother, Frank, and Sam's brother William Bryan of Carrick. When Jane left Cormiston that day for Sam's property, Strathmore, she took her album with her, turning a new page.

There is no portrait to tell us what Jane looked like when young, none even when she was old. Great-nieces and nephews—she and Sam had no children—recall 'Aunt Bryan' when she was old and in a wheel chair; to them she seemed awesome though unfailingly kind. Her mother called her 'My dear and only daughter', and she cannot have been awesome at twenty-seven, when she went to lovely Strathmore. Her new home was a single-story colonial dwelling of cream plastered brick; though unpretentious in style it was not the simple farm house that Cormiston was: Strathmore was definitely an 'establishment'. Wooden supports of a light and elegant design rose in pairs from the flagged veranda to the low shingled roof. From the veranda and through the French windows there was a view clear across a sheet of water and wide paddocks to the distant Ben Lomond and other mountains of the Eastern Tiers. Sam had made the lake himself, damming the small neighbouring river called the Nile; the lake's true purpose was to work the mill that he had built in a hollow to the left of the house, but in placing it he had taken care that it should also enhance the beauty of Strathmore; indeed, Sam's skill in planning and planting proved him an artist as well as a farmer in a large way. Behind the house stretched two wings with kitchen and stores and the quarters for the servants assigned to Sam by the Government; these servants were probably the first convicts with whom Jane had had daily dealings, and no doubt she found them a mixture of good qualities and bad, like the free country folk who had served her hitherto. The stables and hay-loft, a tall building of rose-apricot bricks, stood off a little to the rear; on one side of the cottage quarters a high wall of the same brick, dusky warm, sheltered a kitchen garden from winds blowing off the cold Western Tiers. These vegetable plots and herb beds Jane could reach by a small gate from the flower garden between house and lake. Sam had edged the lake with trees on the right, where the Nile ran into it, and planted

hawthorns on the house's left, at the carriage gates, and along the road past the nearby mill-houses and mill. Only a few steps from these gates a path dropped into a dell of young oaks and elms and sycamores brushing the mill's base, their leaves rustling to the music of birds, the splash of water and the creak of the wooden wheel: the rumble of the three pairs of millstones, grinding the neighbourhood's corn and Sam's own, sounded up in the house and far beyond. In fine still weather the rumble formed part of Strathmore's serenity, like the loud murmur of bees in a sleepy garden; when a storm lowered, the sound deepened the storm's threat. Surely Jane loved her home and its activities and blessed the impulse that once made its Irish master leave it to look at the Swan, and so to meet and make friends with her brother James.



THE
Hobart Town Gazette.

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY.

HIS Excellency The LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR directs, that all Public Notifications which may appear in this Paper with any Official Signature thereunto affixed, shall be considered as Official communications made to those Persons to whom they may relate.

By command of His Excellency,

JOHN BURNETT, Colonial Secretary.

VOLUME XVI.)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1831.

(NUMBER 799.)

GOVERNMENT NOTICE,
No. 185.

*Colonial Secretary's Office,
Sept. 8, 1831.*

HIS MAJESTY'S INSTRUCTIONS no longer admitting of the disposal of LANDS in this Colony otherwise than by Purchase, His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor has directed it to be notified, to all persons who have not received answers to their applications for Grants, that as soon as THE REGULATIONS FOR THE SALE OF LAND, agreeably to THE KING'S INSTRUCTIONS, shall be completed, they will be published for general information.

*By His Excellency's Command,
J. BURNETT.*

GOVERNMENT NOTICE.

No. 188.

*Colonial Secretary's Office,
Sept. 14, 1831.*

THE periods for which the under-mentioned persons were transported, expiring at the date placed after their names, certificates of their freedom may be obtained then, or at any subsequent period,

upon application to this Office, or to that of a Police Magistrate in the Interior:—

Eliza Brown, 87, Midas, 15th inst.
George Battams, 864, Medina, 16th do.
Richard Pearce, 385, do. do.
Joseph Williamson, 659, do. do.
Thomas Ratten, 405, Lady East, do.
Edward Watts, 887, Roslyn Castle, do.

*By Command of
The Lieutenant Governor,
J. BURNETT.*

GOVERNMENT NOTICE.

No. 184.

*Colonial Secretary's Office,
Sept. 7, 1831.*

THE periods for which the under-mentioned persons were transported having expired, certificates of their freedom have been granted to them accordingly:

Sarah Dunnett, 23, Morley
Richard Beards, Ocean.

*By Command of
The Lieutenant Governor,
J. BURNETT.*

GOVERNMENT NOTICE,
No. 189.

*Colonial Secretary's Office,
Sept. 14, 1831.*

TICKETS of Leave have been granted to the undermentioned, between the 7th and 14th instant:—
John Campbell, 512, Morley
Hugh Mackay, 175, Asia, (1)
Joseph Poole, 515, Roslyn Castle

*By Command of
The Lieutenant Governor,
J. BURNETT.*

GOVERNMENT NOTICE.

No. 190.

*Colonial Secretary's Office,
Sept. 14, 1831.*

THOMAS Seddon, 935, Woodford, (2) Thomas May, 627, Marmion, and, Charles Welling, 746, Andromeda, have been appointed to the Field Police.

*By Command of
The Lieutenant Governor,
J. BURNETT.*

GOVERNMENT NOTICE.

No. 186.

*Colonial Secretary's Office,
Sept. 10, 1831.*

JAMES Walton, 1066, Manlius, (2) William Carlow, 785, Woodford, (1) and, Samuel Robinson, 515,

26. THE END OF FREE LAND GRANTS

The new terms for the disposal of Crown Lands had been published the previous June; the regulations followed in February 1832



27. OYSTER HARBOUR, KING GEORGE'S SOUND, 1826

From 'Voyage de l'Astrolabe', by Dumont d'Urville

STEPHEN AND THE *THISTLE*

LIEUT. PRESTON of the *Ellen*, back at Swan River from his pursuit of Captain Dance and the *Sulphur*, told Camfield that the Hentys were thought but little of at Launceston: in the first embittered moment of knowing that old Mr. Henty had passed the Swan by, Camfield entered this in his diary as 'comfortable news'. The Hentys, however, continued their friendly attempts to further his interests and he soon returned to his normal attitude of wistful admiration of their qualities and their greater fortune; nor were the Hentys long in emerging from the anonymity of newcomers to take their place in Launceston life. Before the end of the year Thomas had been made a magistrate;¹ James was well established as a merchant and had been elected by the Turf Club as treasurer of the next race meeting; Stephen with the schooner *Thistle* was developing a trade with Hobart Town and Sydney and was ready to accept freight for further ports; Jane was pleasantly settled at Strathmore. But for the younger members of the family there was not enough scope, and soon there would be John to provide for as well as Edward and Frank. The great problem remained—how to acquire land without enough money to buy it, land large enough and good enough to produce an income that, added to the expected trading profits of James and Stephen, would support the parents and their seven sons and the six young women that must some day be expected to join Charlotte as daughters-in-law to Thomas and his wife. The family had left England to secure a comfortable competence; had they irrevocably lost most of the capital that to this security was the necessary key?

Before 1833 began—just before James's first son, Henry, was born on 9 January at the Cameron Street house—Stephen set

¹ An undated paper in the Hobart Archives may have influenced his appointment as an honorary magistrate: 'From long acquaintance with Mr. Henty of West Tarring as well personal as in the capacity of neighboring magistrates we can gladly and conscientiously testify that from his intelligence, activity, Integrity and knowledge in Parochial affairs we esteem him fully competent to discharge the duties of Police Magistrate ably and efficiently. R. Jones, Lt. Gen^l K.C.B.; W. G. K. Gratwicke; J. M. Lloyd, Bart.; Charles M. Burrell, Bart.'

off from Launceston in the *Thistle* to pick up John at King George's Sound and to continue with an assorted cargo to the Swan. The *Thistle* had a new master, Captain James Liddle, the third since James had bought her in Fremantle;¹ the *Perth Gazette* of 19 January noted the arrival of the *Thistle*, Captain Liddle, from Launceston, supercargo Mr. S. G. Henty, passengers Mr. John Henty and two natives from King George's Sound. When she sailed again for Launceston Stephen stayed behind to strengthen trade links in accordance with James's plan, but John sailed with her and Henry Camfield was on board too. Camfield's affairs had now reached the point where he could not hope to make ends meet. He advertised Burrswood ('*that desirable farm*') to let for five years. Selling would have brought him the small capital necessary to undertake share farming in Van Diemen's Land, which James had strongly advised his doing, but he did not like to sell until he heard his family's views; moreover, he disliked the idea of working for another man and still thought the value of the Swan River property would increase. Brought to borrowing at last, he had been obliged to draw on his impecunious father for thirty pounds in favour of Stephen Henty. In Launceston he stayed with James and Charlotte, trying to make up his mind as to his next move; it might, he thought, even be best to go back to England.

Launceston, April 9th, 1833.

I cannot tell how far it may be desirable for me to return here again: time will tell. . . . I have seen but little of the country since I have been here, but from what I have seen and heard the land is decidedly preferable to Swan River: but it requires a fortune to purchase a farm and stock it and then wheat and cattle do not appear to pay the farmer; wool only, appears to be the staple commodity. I am going into the interior tomorrow, I shall be able to learn more about it. I am perfectly at home where I am, am considered as one of the family, nothing can exceed the kindness of my friends, their little babe was christened today, *Henry*, he is a fine little fellow . . . Stephen Henty is at Swan River. Edward is gone to Spencer's Gulph whaling for six months, he left on Saturday, John is at [C]Ormiston. I was there last week, they were all well, have not seen Mrs. Bryan yet (formerly Jane Henty) her husband was here last

¹ From the time of *Thistle's* arrival in Australian waters her masters previous to Liddle were Arthur Corbett, John James, T. Young, — Thorne (various sources).

week, I knew him at Swan River, has large possessions, flocks and herds. Mr. Henty [James] has purchased a large quantity of seal skins which he has shipp'd for England. He is now very busy about the Protector ship which has brought him sugar—the business that has been transacted here within these few weeks is very great, far beyond what I expected.

The change from meagre rations and salt meat to Charlotte's ample larder had been too much for him: 'I am not quite reconciled to the change of diet yet, it makes me very stupid. I am also very anxious about you and my Dear Sisters, to whom I send my best love.'

The people of Swan River, as Camfield and Mrs. Shaw had both written, were none too pleased at the Hentys' departure from the colony; perhaps it was some accusation of desertion that caused the brush between Stephen and another young man that had taken place at Fremantle and was reported in the *Perth Gazette* of 23 March 1833:

On Saturday last, Mr. John Wade was brought before the sitting Magistrate, G. Leake, Esq., for insulting Mr. S. G. Henty on the South Beach, Fremantle, on Thursday evening, and calling him a poltroon and a coward, with an intent to excite him to a breach of the peace. Captain McDermott [master of the cutter *Cumberland*] came forward to prove that the expressions made use of, had this tendency; which statement the Court fully concurred in, and bound Mr. Wade over to keep the peace for twelve months, himself in £100, and two sufficient sureties £50 each, or be committed to prison, until sureties were given. In the course of the evening the sureties were given and Mr. Wade was discharged.

The Civil Commissioner remarked, that one fatal instance of duelling having occurred, which was still strong in our memories, had determined him to prosecute the most vigorous measures, to suppress this evil; and Mr. Wade having been brought before him on a similar charge, he felt it his duty, to bind him over to keep the peace, in the penalty we have stated.

The affair alluded to by Mr. Leake was the duel between W. Nairn Clark, a solicitor, and G. F. Johnson, a merchant, that had shocked the colony a few months before. Johnson, the challenger, had died from the effects of his wounds; Clark, with the seconds, was tried for wilful murder; the jury had returned a verdict of 'Not Guilty' for all three.¹

¹ The trial took place at Fremantle before William Mackie on 10.1.32 (*W.A.*

The *Thistle* returned to Fremantle in May, bringing wheat and oats, cheeses and loaf sugar, onions and potatoes—eight tons of these; muslins and prints and boots; kangaroo skins, soap and candles, shingles, lead, and iron pots: James and Stephen knew their market and that anything essential would sell and, except rum, little else.

Stephen stayed on in the West, visiting York and according to the *Gazette* (31.8.83) riding over the mountains in ten hours with ease; 'various impediments however present themselves to retard the rapid progress of waggons': in fact, there was still no road. The *Gazette* also reported (mistakenly) that Mr. James Henty and Mr. Bryan—'the gentleman who at one time had formed a very unfavourable opinion of the Colony and did not hesitate to proclaim it'—were likely to visit the Swan. This, the *Gazette* felt, would silence the revilings of interested individuals; this, and the fact that 'our Contemporaries' in the sister colony were now treating the Swan with greater fairness; and it was within the knowledge of the *Gazette* that many who had been induced by false pictures of Van Diemen's Land to leave the West now wished earnestly to return. Stephen must have kept a tactful tongue in his head, praising where he could, as for instance the appearance of the country at York and the flocks there of his friends Arthur Trimmer and Bland:¹ no use to decry the colony where his interests still lay.

Fremantle held its first official race meeting in October 1833, and Stephen took part. It was reported at length in the *Gazette*, for the sake of any future historian curious as to the origin of racing in the West: did the reporter know of the authentic first race meeting, that winter of 1829 when Captain Currie on the Governor's pony beat Lieut. Preston's 'out and out'? Only four years earlier, and without a committee or a crowd, but history all the same. The meeting of 2 October 1833 took place

about a mile and a half from Fremantle on a slightly undulating plain skirting the sea, the adjoining hills affording a full view of the course; booths which were erected on the brow of the hill, with their variegated flags, the ginger bread nut stall, and the lame fiddler, contributed much to the animation of the scene. The groups of fashion-

Hist. Soc. Jour., vol. i, pt. v). John Wade of Hereford arr. *Calista*, 5.8.29 (*III H.R.A.*, vol. vi, pp. 628, 638).

¹ R. H. Bland of Nottingham, arr. *Marquis of Anglesey*, 23.8.29 (*ibid.*, p. 638).

ably dressed ladies and gentlemen promenading to and fro—the tilted carts—the busy din of preparation—the cry of clear the course—and at length ponies being placed side by side at the starting post—the jockies all appropriately dressed—we can assure our readers who were not fortunate enough to witness it, presented no contemptible display. . . . Owing to the protracted sittings of the Quarter Sessions, the races did not commence until about half past two o'clock.

Stephen's Jack ran in two out of four races and won the last, which was described as more amusing than edifying, since most of the five competing Timor ponies preferred following branch roads. In conclusion the *Gazette* remarked that

some evil genius seems invariably to watch over these meetings. The arrangements for the amusement of all parties would not be complete without a row—consequently a row we had, but we should not have expected a Gentleman of Mr. Lamb's respectability to have been the originator.¹

In November Stephen sailed for Launceston in the cutter *Cumberland*, a vessel that next year was lost between Fremantle and the Leeuwin with Captain McDermott and all hands.

¹ William Lamb, of Surrey, arr. *Marquis of Anglesey*, 23.8.29 (*III H.R.A.*, vol. vi, pp. 625, 638).

THE OPPOSITE COAST

EARLY in 1833, as Camfield had written, John Henty joined his parents and Frank at Cormiston; for a while we know no more of him than that. There may have been some aspects of his primitive life at the Sound that he was sorry to give up; it depends on how long it had amused him to be master of a few men and a small flock of sheep, to learn the ways of the natives of the King tribe, to catch fish and to hunt the kangaroo. It had not been an easy existence; after six months he had been forced to apply to Dr. Collie at Albany for government provisions on credit for the subsistence of his servants; he had run out of both money and food sooner than expected and there was no way of getting supplies of either from Launceston or Fremantle. Collie issued him with goods to the value of £29. 3s. 5d.; the Scottish George Cheyne, 'a settler of substance', had to be helped out in the same way.¹ So perhaps to be once more where food was varied and plentiful and served with china and silver and a loving hand may have compensated for the restrictions that went with regular work and the parental roof.

It was Edward's turn to leave home. As long ago as 1824 he had been impatient to emigrate to the colonies and now was impatient at the little that this particular colony had to offer a young man ambitious to own and work land. Many besides Edward felt this discontent: in the mountainous island, with too little pasture and already too many sheep, stock farming could expand no farther; and there, invisible beyond the turbulent waters of Bass Strait, lay the mainland, limitless and untouched.

It was only lately that the thoughts of frustrated settlers had turned that way. During the first quarter of the century little was known of the southernmost portion of New South Wales—the country lying around and inland from Westernport and Port Phillip Bays. After Port Phillip Bay had been found independently by both Murray and Flinders within a few weeks of each other early in 1802, it had been chosen by Governor King

¹ *W.A. Arch.*

of New South Wales as the site for a new penal settlement and a defence post against the French. Early in 1803 King had sent Surveyor Grimes from Sydney to examine the port's inner shores and Lieut.-Colonel David Collins had arrived a few months later from England with three hundred convicts, a few free settlers, and a detachment of Marines. Grimes had found some 'excellent pasturage' and discovered 'a Great River' at the northern end of the bay, but in general his report was discouraging. Collins, having landed his people at a barren spot, the nearest possible anchorage inside the Heads, found the country 'unpromising and unproductive'; he did not take time to go as far as the big river, but in any case, for defence reasons, was averse from leaving the neighbourhood of the Heads. He quickly made up his mind to follow his own inclinations and remove to the site of a post recently installed on the Derwent River in the south of Van Diemen's Land, a part of the world as yet unsettled but known from the accounts of navigators to be a place of beauty, fertility, and copious streams—all that, so far as he had seen it, Port Phillip was not. The Port Phillip Settlement was abandoned and Hobart Town founded in February 1804, while to guard Bass Strait from the French a settlement was begun a few months later at Port Dalrymple at the mouth of the Tamar River, on Van Diemen's Land's north coast. For twenty years nothing happened to counteract Collins's known damning opinion of Port Phillip; then, in 1825, first knowledge of its hinterland created in Van Diemen's Land, as elsewhere, a different view. That year the journey of Hume and Hovell, made from the Sydney side, filled Launceston with rich rumours of the country the explorers had crossed: further stimulus came early in 1827 from the occupation of Westernport during the period of renewed fears of the French; then, in 1830, Sturt's great journey down the Murray excited still more interest although it related to a region far distant from that part of New South Wales that was opposite to Van Diemen's Land. But no plans for crossing the Strait could get farther than the speculative stage. Remote from Sydney and the located parts of New South Wales, that vast southern area was barred to would-be settlers by Governor Darling and his successor, Bourke, under instructions from a home government opposed on principle to dispersion of population. In 1833 it was still forbidden territory, still uninvaded

except by sealing parties and by whalers working on chosen parts of its coasts. From these adventurers, frequenters of Van Diemen's Land taverns heard tales of the forbidden land. Whaling, the centuries-old industry that provided the civilized world with light after sundown and with oil for the treatment of metals, leather, and jute, had moved from the Atlantic into the Pacific and was now at its peak. Black whale oil and sperm oil and the valuable whalebone had been taken in eastern Australian waters by French, American, and British whalers since the earliest days of the Sydney settlement; it was a source of wealth that everyone wanted to tap, and ships in pursuit of it had long worked in Bass Strait and beyond. Sealers had gone farther than whalers, forced by their own destructive methods to find new rookeries to plunder. Their calling, decent in itself and followed by many respectable men, was one that also attracted runaways, both convicts and seamen. Reckless, often grossly cruel, their savagery was equalled by their seamanship; sealers, not Captain Sturt, had been the first to find the great Lake Alexandrina at the mouth of the Murray River:¹ even before Stirling's first visit to the West they had been in King George's Sound, and Major Lockyer, arriving at the Sound to form the first military post, learnt that sealers had rounded the Leeuwin in their open boats and sailed up the Swan.² Among the islands of Bass Strait, though nearer to settlement, sealers' gangs lived unmolested, raiding the mainland and Van Diemen's Land for native wives, using them as slaves and hunters and bartering oil and skins for goods from passing ships.³ Whalers were a very different set of men, a hard field for the missionary, it is true, but respected for their prowess in a dangerous, exciting, and skilled trade. By now among the whaleship crews there were many young colonials, and as well as British and foreign ships in the trade were some locally owned and locally built.⁴ Each year of late, before winter set in, a number of vessels sailed from Launceston and Hobart Town with harpoons and trypots, boats and skilled crews, bound for the whaling grounds off the Island and on the opposite coast. The *Socrates*, that beat the *Forth* for the only Tamar pilot, was one of these; another was

¹ *III H.R.A.*, vol. vi, p. 537 and note 10.

² *Ibid.*, p. 604.

³ Captain John Hart, *Letters from Victorian Pioneers*, p. 303.

⁴ *Blue Gum Clippers*, ch. vi.

the *Caernarvon*, whose whaling voyage gave Edward his chance to cross the Strait.

Just before the time of the Hentys' arrival in Van Diemen's Land, Spencer's Gulf, where the *Caernarvon* was bound, had begun to be talked of as the site for a new settlement. The failure of Swan River and the limitations of the two older colonies, and the conviction of many people that distress in the Mother Country could be relieved only by transferring her paupers and her unused capital across the sea, led to discussion at both ends of the world of possible places where a new colony might be formed. An English rumour, repeated in the Van Diemen's Land press, spoke of a private settlement planned for Port Lincoln, in Spencer's Gulf. In June 1832 the *Sulphur* brought the rumour from Hobart to the West with the store of provisions she had taken so long to collect; at Albany the news drew from Dr. Collie a pessimistic comment:

If Government do not patronise [the Settlement] and support it, I expect to hear of its desertion in a 12 month and I do not believe 1/20th part that is said about the good soil; its vicinity to Van Diemen's Land would be much in its favour, and if its soil be really good, Government might countenance it sooner or later.

The rumour was based on truth; there was indeed at this time a private movement for the settlement of South Australia close to the Gulf: but the Government had no intention of countenancing it, those then in authority, bent on economy, being in fervent agreement with the Duke of Wellington's view that Great Britain had too many colonies already. The statement in the Van Diemen's Land papers was curtly contradicted in letters from Under-Secretary Hay to both Bourke and Arthur; Hay wrote (30.8.32) to

correct the impression that such a settlement was to be established at Spencer's Gulf on the Southern coast of New Holland by means of a company formed in England. No such company has received the sanction of H.M.'s Government.¹

This communication was crossed by a letter from Arthur to

¹ On 30.8.32 the Colonial Office 'corrects an impression' and on 10.4.33 'denies a statement', for this was the period of official resistance to movements for the founding of a new settlement, soon to give place to the reluctant establishment of the Province of South Australia. See Grenfell Price, *The Foundation and Settlement of South Australia*, ch. i.

Hay (24.9.32) making a warm offer to help form such a colony if the information were true.¹ His letter, a long one, with his own idea of the reasons for Swan River's failure and a detailed plan for ensuring success at Spencer's Gulf, showed great eagerness to widen his own territory and powers by assuming responsibility for the new settlement, at least in its early stages. He enumerated what he thought were the chief causes of the checked growth at the Swan, conclusions arrived at 'from the minute enquiries I have made of many of the most intelligent Emigrants who have proceeded on from Swan River to Van Diemen's Land'. Settler, not emigrant, was the name then generally applied to people of means and education, but it is quite likely that among those consulted was James Henty; for Arthur wrote not long after the Hobart Town visit of James, who at the time was certainly known as a prominent arrival from the Swan. Arthur had quite rightly concluded that insufficient preparation had been made before the arrival of settlers in the West; in the case of Spencer's Gulf he advised certain steps to be taken in advance. These were, the despatch of a colonial vessel

under the Command of an experienced officer in the Commission of Peace in whose known judgment and discretion dependence may be completely reposed . . . the employment of an experienced surveyor and an assistant, twelve well-behaved convicts chosen for their usefulness as mechanics; a missionary (we now have one in every way highly competent) with a party of the aborigines of this Colony . . . who, from their love of change, would willingly afford their services if it were explained to them that the object was to conciliate the Aborigines of the South coast of Australia.

This expedition, said Arthur,

victualled for six months, the Secretary of State will perceive, embraces the most essential elements on a small scale for founding a new Settlement—for discovering the capabilities of a Country, and for conciliating its Inhabitants, of whom any Land we may wish to Occupy should be formally purchased with such Baubles as they will consider a remuneration.

The point of view shown in the last sentence and in the following paragraph is of particular interest in connexion with events to come in Port Phillip. It was, said Arthur,

¹ *Hobart Arch.*

a fatal error in the first settlement of Van Diemen's Land that a Treaty was not entered into with the Natives, of which Savages will comprehend the nature; had they received some compensation for the Territory they surrendered, no matter how trifling,—and had adequate Laws been from *the very first* introduced and *enforced* for their protection, His Majesty's Government would have acquired a valuable possession, without the injurious consequences which have followed our occupation, and which must ever remain a stain upon the colonization of Van Diemen's Land. I feel very confident that the Aborigines of Southern Australia may be saved from the like destructive calamity, if prudent measures are adopted from the commencement; and in the introduction of such my Services, so far as His Majesty's Government may be pleased to command them, will be most cheerfully given to the full extent of the powers with which His Majesty may be pleased to invest me. If Kangaroo Island & the country comprehended between the degrees of 130 and 140 S. Long. formed part of the Territory of Van Diemen's Land for a few years, Laws might with facility be passed for its Government by the Legislative Council; and, whilst Sessions might be established for the Trial on the Spot of all offences cognizable before such a Tribunal, Offenders capitally charged might be brought before the Supreme Court at Hobart Town or Launceston.

The trifling expense of the whole undertaking—'trifling if properly planned'—he suggested might be met by an advance on the revenue from sales of land in Van Diemen's Land, to be repaid later from the proceeds of land sales in the colony itself. All so simple; all thought out from the point of view of a prison administrator, even to hanging the settlers in the end.

The letter finished with a reminder of how near Van Diemen's Land was to the Australian coast: 'The ordinary passage from the north side of the Island to Kangaroo Island is not more than ten days or a fortnight—it may be accomplished in six!' He did not say—but the words almost speak themselves—whereas from Sydney and the jurisdiction of Governor Bourke the passage is twice as long.

In reply, Under-Secretary Hay once more denied that any settlement was contemplated at Spencer's Gulf: the official bar to the mainland still held. At the date of Hay's letter, April 1833, young Edward Henty, disheartened at Van Diemen's Land's lack of prospects, was just setting out in the *Caernarvon*; according to Camfield Edward's object was to see something of

whaling, but as well, and more urgently, he went to look for fresh fields: for Edward was preparing to jump that official barrier and to take his first steps along the forbidden road.

In the same month Captain Liddle sailed in the *Thistle* for the Swan. His instructions, written by James as *Thistle's* owner, were kept by Liddle for over fifty years. 'After leaving Swan River', James wrote, 'you will call in at Spencer's Gulf and communicate with the *Carnarvon* who may have a cargo of oil for you.' When Liddle reached Port Lincoln there was no *Caernarvon*, but he found a bottle tied to a pole; in the bottle was a note from Edward telling him to look for the ship at Memory Cove. There Edward was picked up and the *Thistle* sailed for home. The beauty of Port Lincoln may have attracted Edward, but if, as is certain, he looked for running water, like Flinders, the Port's discoverer, he looked in vain. But down along the coast to the south-east, 400 miles nearer to Launceston, they called at a small harbour that seemed to Edward all that he could wish. This was Portland Bay, known to whalers and sealers for some years past and where the *Thistle* expected to pick up another cargo of oil. There a headland marked the end of a grim stretch of sheer cliff and cape; beyond was the shelter of a curved bay and a long beach. Once ashore, Edward saw it not merely as a harbour with wood and fresh water and good black soil, but as the doorstep to the untouched region that lay immediately behind. A Van Diemen's Land whaler, William Dutton, had built a hut and planted a potato patch for use when the season brought him there;¹ others who used it as a whaling port were John Sinclair, John Griffiths, and Kelly and Hewitt, all Launceston ship-owners; but it was anybody's and nobody's land. Edward and Captain Liddle dug a turf from a hill overlooking the beach and carried it back to Launceston to help convince Thomas that Portland Bay was the end of the Hentys' long quest.² After another visit across the Strait, this time with

¹ William Pelham Dutton, b. Sydney 1811 of emigrant parents. One of the sealers and whalers with early associations with Portland Bay, his occasional periods of residence there led later to dispute of Edward Henty's title as Portland's first settler. When older, Pelham returned to farm not far from the bay, and died there (*Learmonth*, pp. 30-34). A tourist road in the neighbourhood of Portland is named Dutton Way, in his honour.

² From letter 27 Nov. 1872 written by Capt. Liddle to Edward Henty to remind him of old times. *Henty Family Papers*.

Captain Hart in Griffith's schooner, *Elizabeth*, and an examination of the land within a few miles and in various directions, Edward returned to Launceston with his mind finally made up.

But his father was not to be persuaded at once; perhaps with the approach of old age he had developed some of the caution that James had tried so hard to inculcate. Thomas had heard James's view of Swan River, and also Henry Camfield's, not quite so black as that of James; there was this talk of Spencer's Gulf; and now here was Edward with his bit of turf and his enthusiasm for Portland Bay. There was only one thing to do: Thomas must do what he had always intended, he must go and see for himself. He was fifty-eight and used to comfort and the ministrations of a devoted wife; but he was the head of the family and only he could settle this matter of the family's land. The *Thistle* was a solid vessel of 57 tons, Liddle a proved master, Thomas himself an active, confident, and determined man. So, early in the summer season, he set out from Launceston on a private exploration journey of more than 2,000 miles. Perhaps by design, there was no mention of Portland Bay or Spencer's Gulf in the *Launceston Independent's* statement that the *Thistle* had sailed on 2 December for the Swan.

Part VI
COASTAL SURVEY
1830-1834



I

THE BAY AND THE GULF

SINCE the Hentys had the diary habit, one would expect Thomas to have kept a record of this to him momentous voyage, but none remains. Its course can, however, be traced from his own statements at the time and from Edward's recollections dictated to his wife in later years. First, across Bass Strait and north-westward to Portland Bay. Until the discovery of the strait by Surgeon George Bass in 1798, ships bound to Port Jackson from India and the Cape kept to the south, far out of sight of the Australian coast, until they had rounded Van Diemen's Land and could head north. In December 1800 Lieut. Grant of the *Lady Nelson*, the first ship to sail through the strait from the west, had sighted and named two headlands and a little farther on had passed and named Portland Bay. Then, in 1802, Matthew Flinders in the *Investigator* completed the exploration of the great arc of the continent's southern coast, traced by the Dutch in 1627 to the head of the bight; Flinders had now linked the most easterly point of Dutch discovery to the western limits of his own and Bass's voyages from Sydney Cove. After that, in the safer months of the year, east-bound ships began to use the strait to shorten the passage to Sydney, and from Sydney and Van Diemen's Land sealers and whalers more and more frequented its islands and broken coasts, sailing as far as the great gulfs discovered by Flinders, and beyond. By the thirties certain points on the coast were known to a number of sea-captains: Captain John Hart,¹ for instance, of the *Elizabeth*

¹ Hart (1809-1873), *Pioneers*, pp. 302-6; in turn merchant-captain and trader, ship-owner, 'overlander', flour-miller, member of the South Australian Legislative Assembly, Treasurer, and Premier, C.M.G. (*Serle*).

schooner, in 1831 picked up some sealers from the Lawrence Rocks, in Portland Bay, where they had been collecting skins for the last twelve months; he went on to Kangaroo Island at the mouth of St. Vincent's Gulf, to collect salt and more seal-skins for his employer, John Griffiths of Launceston; next year, on another sealing trip, he 'landed on almost every rock between Bass Straits and Doubtful Island Bay', near King George's Sound. On his return to Launceston he went across to Portland Bay 'attending on' the whalers employed in the first fishery at that spot; this was in the winter of 1833, when Edward Henty went with him in the *Elizabeth* to have a confirmatory second look at the bay. It was five months after this that the persuasive Edward returned to the bay in the *Thistle* and, presumably supported by Captain Liddle, displayed to his father the virtues of the harbour, the vegetation, and the nearby streams.¹

At Portland Bay Thomas had his first intimate view of virgin country, and he found it good. He did not go very far afield but, as he wrote to John Street, 'I have seen enough of Portland Bay to make me believe that I can find an Estate that will satisfy, and *gratify* me'. Street, far away on Bathurst Plains, was safe for confidences, but guile was needed with those near at hand; during those few days at Portland, and later, Thomas, while keeping a sharp eye open for the evidence he sought, with the more or less innocent chicanery practised at all times by treasure-hunters, disguised from others his special interest in the bay.

Kangaroo Island was their next port of call and, this side of Spencer's Gulf, their only one with a name; but Henty claimed that he and his sons between them had made various discoveries 'not laid down in any chart or map hitherto published', and that he had found many parts of the south coast suitable for sheep;² therefore, if these claims were not exaggerated, the *Thistle* must have landed him and Edward for the inspection of a number of unnamed points.

¹ Learmonth says (*Portland Bay*, pp. 70-71) that Stephen accompanied Edward and his father in the *Thistle*, but this is not so: Stephen was at that time on his way from Fremantle to Launceston as a passenger in the cutter *Cumberland* (*Perth Gazette*, 16.11.33), to which voyage the journal quoted by Learmonth refers. On the *Cumberland's* arrival at Launceston Stephen at once returned to Fremantle in the cutter *Fanny*, navigating her himself, and arrived there 20.2.34 (*Perth Gazette*, 22.2.34).

² Henty's memorial.

Kangaroo Island, they were to find, was not a small island, but as large as Henty's own native Sussex. It was covered with dense, dry thickets of scrub and fallen trees; in places granite rocks broke through the scrub; there were a number of small beaches and one good roadstead, Nepean Bay, called by sealers American Harbour. In the summer of 1833-4 the island looked to Thomas Henty very much as it had to Flinders when he discovered it in 1802. When Flinders landed with his party he had found a few cassowarys moving about close to the water and herds of kangaroos and seals 'dwelling amicably together'. The seal, he decided, was 'much the most discerning animal of the two; for its action bespoke a knowledge of our not being kangaroos, whereas the kangaroos not unfrequently appeared to consider us seals'.¹ Too far from the mainland to be reached by native canoes, the island was uninhabited; the animals had no fear of the *Investigator* party and innocently suffered themselves to be shot in the eyes or knocked on the head. Thirty-nine kangaroos were killed in this way. Flinders, hating the butchery, yet rejoiced that his men were provided with an abundance of fresh food; for some days, officers and men had as many kangaroo steaks and as much rich soup as they could eat—'a delightful regale after four months privation from almost any fresh provisions'—and Flinders gave the island its name out of gratitude for this feast, preventive of scurvy for another few weeks. For the kangaroos one lesson was enough; on the second day of the *Investigator*'s visit, they proved shy.

In the thirties Kangaroo Island still had plenty of game and no settlers except a handful of sailors who had exchanged the sea for the easier life of a sealer with a slave wife. Captain John Hart of the *Elizabeth* apparently understood their point of view. They were, he said,

chiefly men who had left various sealing vessels when on their homeward voyage, the masters readily agreeing to an arrangement by which they secured for the next season all the skins obtained during their absence. This island life had a peculiar charm for the sailors, being supplied from the ship with flour, tea, sugar, tobacco, and a few slops, and living generally in pairs on the shore of one of the little bays. They cultivated a small garden to supply them with potatoes, onions, and a small patch of barley for their poultry. They thus led

¹ *Flinders*, vol. i, p. 172.

an easy, independent life, as compared with that on board ship. They obtained wives from the mainland; these attended to the wallaby snares, caught fish, and made up the boat's crew when on a sealing excursion to the neighbouring rocks. At Kangaroo Island, there were some sixteen or eighteen of these men. On a certain day, once a year, they assembled from all parts of the Island to meet the vessel in Nepean Bay, and dispose of their skins, getting a supply in return for the following year, the only money required being a sovereign or two for making earrings.

This was the island at the time of Henty's call; it can hardly have appealed to him as a place for settlement, except for outlaws or voluntary exiles from the civilized world.

From there the *Thistle* moved on to Port Lincoln, the harbour on the western shore of Spencer's Gulf. Few but sealers and whalers had seen it but it was persistently spoken of, both in England and Van Diemen's Land, as the place where the next settlement was to be. How many people who discussed the port's merits were familiar with the view of Flinders that for a colony it was an unsuitable site? According to him it had 'a sufficient covering of grass, bushes, and small trees not to look desolate' and was certainly a fine harbour; but he said it was

much to be regretted that it possesses no constant run of fresh water . . . and for the establishment of a Colony, which the excellence of the port might seem to invite, the little fertility of the soil offers no inducement.¹

If in Henty's day there were some who could quote this, there were perhaps a few others who could point to the opposite view of Baudin's officers, those French scientists who trod so hard on Flinders's heels. But by now these comments had lost interest for the ordinary man, for the early explorers had known merely the coasts; more important now were the opinions of explorers who had reached the coasts from the inland—Hume and Hovell and, more latterly, Captain Charles Sturt. Sturt's exploit had settled the fantasy of the inland sea² and discovered what was im-

¹ Flinders, vol. i, pp. 140, 148.

² So far as N.S.W. was concerned; but the legend of an inland sea was revived in W.A. some years later and persisted there longer still. The *Laun. Adv.* of 22.6.37 reprinted the following paragraph from the *London Observer* of 16.1.37: 'At the Royal Geographical Society, an interesting communication has been read from the Swan River, addressed to Major Irwin, giving information of the discovery of an extensive nation of natives in the interior, several of who had spoken of and

measurably better—a network of considerable rivers and a thousand miles of the great Murray River itself. His expedition and that of Hume and Hovell traversed widely separated parts of the immense territory that was then New South Wales, and the points where they emerged on the southern coast were some hundreds of miles apart; but until the full account of Sturt's 'descent into the interior' was published in London in the autumn of 1833 there were many English would-be colonizers, who, unable to grasp the great Australian distances, inevitably lumped the newly explored territories together as 'those parts', or even 'that spot'. Even in Van Diemen's Land there was some tendency to think of them collectively; they were all on the desirable mainland, the beckoning 'opposite coast'.

Sturt's brief first report of his journey, published in Sydney, 1830, cannot have had any personal interest for the Hentys, since it appeared when all their thoughts were centred on the Swan; his book telling the full story and finishing with praise, not of Port Lincoln, but of another place on the south coast where 'the colonist might venture with every prospect of success', had not reached Launceston when Thomas left there on his inspection voyage. If Thomas had been able to read Sturt's description of the richness of the soil and abundance of pasture on the eastern shore of St. Vincent's Gulf, and his opinion that it was there and not at Port Lincoln that a settlement was bound to succeed, surely his 'excessive curiosity' as well as his shrewd common sense would have taken the *Thistle* nosing inquiringly into St. Vincent's before going to Spencer's Gulf.

At Albany the first rumour that a colony was to be established at Port Lincoln had prompted Dr. Collie's sceptical comment on its reputedly good soil; he had not seen it, but spoke out of

confirmed the existence of a great inland sea—an opinion which had been embraced by Drummond and other travellers. The waves were described as being very high, and their idea of its magnitude was that it would take the compass of any man's life to make the circuit; as provided a child were to start from any point he would be an old man when he arrived there again. Sir John Barrow likewise announced that the funds had been provided by the Admiralty for the expedition of Lieutenants Grey and Lushington, who would shortly proceed in the ship-of-war destined for that station, on a surveying expedition, and that they might start to any point they deemed fit, their principle object being directed towards this inland sea, which, to the discredit of this country, had hitherto remained unknown.' An expedition under H. M. Lefroy and H. Landor went out from York in search of the sea in 1843 (*W.A. Arch.*).

bitter wisdom learned at the Swan. Thomas, seeing it for himself and comparing it with the streams and loam of Portland Bay, remembering the chocolate furrows of Tarring, cannot have been impressed: stooping to trickle a handful of Port Lincoln earth through knowing farmer's fingers, he must have shaken his head.

As the *Thistle* lay there at anchor, and in their more idle moments the company talked of this and that, one question that is sure to have arisen was, why the island nearby bore the same name as the brigantine's own. Did Thomas already know, or learn only now, that Thistle's Island was named by Flinders, and not after any vessel, or after Scotland's emblem, but after a man, a shipmate of Flinders's own?¹ The master of the *Investigator*, John Thistle, had volunteered for this voyage under his former leader immediately on returning to England after an absence of six years. A companion of Bass on the famous whale-boat journey that proved the existence of the strait, and of both Flinders and Bass when they circumnavigated Van Diemen's Land, he was known by Flinders to be 'truly a valuable man, as a seaman, an officer, and a good member of society' and loved for 'the goodness and stability of his disposition'. Thistle's zeal for discovery was shared by the rest of the *Investigator*'s company, including a young cousin of Flinders, midshipman John Franklin; when the ship rounded the Cape marking the west shore of the great indentation, now seen for the first time and that Flinders named Spencer's Gulf, the swift tide and the northerly trend of the coast that had before run towards the south-east caused excited conjecture among them all: were they about to discover the truth or otherwise of the popular theory that the continent was not one land mass but was divided right across from the south to the north? Flinders records that

large rivers, deep inlets, inland seas and passages into the Gulf of Carpentaria were terms frequently used in our conversation of this evening, and the prospect of making a new discovery, seemed to have infused new life and vigour into every man in the ship.

Next day, Flinders and the master landed on a large island within the gulf; among the trees and rocks they had been

¹ *Flinders*, vol. i, pp. 132-9.

menaced by a white eagle bounding towards them 'with fierce aspect and outspread wing'; on that day, also, the master was sent to the mainland to look for an anchorage with water. Dusk fell and the cutter, seen to leave the shore, did not return: hallooing, the showing of a lantern and the firing of muskets, brought no answer; the racing tide from the gulf had overturned the boat and Thistle and his seven companions were swept away and drowned. Flinders felt the disaster severely—Thistle, his old shipmate, gone; William Taylor, a midshipman who promised to be an ornament to the Service; and the six seamen, 'all active and useful young men' and all volunteers for the discovery voyage. He gave Thistle's name to the large island where they had scrambled together a few hours before; seven small islands nearby were called after Thistle's companions; he named their place of anchorage Memory Cove, and the Cape that they had rounded in such high spirits the day before he called Cape Catastrophe. Nobody looking at that jutting land for the first time, as Thomas Henty now did, could fail to think of John Thistle and the young adventurers with him, helpless and drowning as darkness fell.

When the *Thistle* left Spencer's Gulf she had more than a thousand miles to sail round the arch of the Bight: empty miles of water, rolling ruthless and unhindered from antarctic regions to the foot of the Bight's cliff-wall, that stony guardian of a desolation that could be guessed at though it had never been seen. As this stage of their journey neared its end and they approached the sandhills and barren peaks and small islands close to King George's Sound, Captain Liddle lowered two boats to be employed in sealing, the men and skins and boats to be picked up again by the *Thistle* on her way home. When they reached the Sound and Thomas landed at Albany he found as Resident, not Dr. Collie, James's erstwhile crony, who had returned to Perth, but Sir Richard Spencer, recently arrived to preside over the settlement of fewer than a hundred souls. Stirling, while in England, had secured Spencer the post at the Resident Officer's salary of £100 a year; that and a promise of land had no doubt seemed inducement enough to an elderly post-captain in retirement at Lyme Regis with a large family to support.¹ At the Sound he and his wife and nine children

¹ *Spencer*, Introduction.

were to know real privation and tragedy; still a newcomer when the *Thistle* arrived, he had already seen enough of the land to realize, as he told Thomas, that the country had been much misrepresented.¹ Like Thomas, he had brought with him a number of prize merinos and Saxon sheep—congenial subject of conversation for a courtesy call; more congenial than that other subject, the short-comings of Retreat, Thomas's own land on Oyster Harbour and chief reason for this passing visit to the Sound.

¹ *Henty Family Papers.*

AUGUSTA AND MRS. MOLLOY

AFTER the Sound, the *Thistle* had one more call to make on the way to Fremantle; this was at Augusta, smallest, most isolated and most beautiful of the sub-settlements of 'The Swan' and the last shelter before rounding Cape Leeuwin for the north. The arrival of a vessel here or at the Sound was always a matter of real importance: ships brought news from the outside world, perhaps food and other needed goods for sale; certainly a welcome change of company while the crew took water aboard or waited for a fair wind. In 1834 so small was the population of Augusta that Thomas and his son and Captain Liddle must surely have been gladly received when they went ashore. The *Thistle's* arrival probably meant most to Mrs. Molloy, wife of the Resident Magistrate and Commanding Officer, for it gave her a chance to send a letter to her husband, then in Perth; it also meant that her days were fuller than ever, for in his absence any business fell to her. He had been away much longer than expected or than either of them liked, detained at headquarters over the affairs of the dwindling settlement in his charge.¹

In 1830, after the disappointments of the Swan's first summer, rumour said that Stirling was contemplating the removal of the capital from Perth to this place, just discovered by himself;² it delighted him with its cooler climate, and its harbour, estuary of a broad river flowing through dense undergrowth and forest trees and with even bigger mahogany trees not far inland: it was said that the name Augusta was to be changed to Stirling's own. As a first step the Governor had planted here a settlement of four households with a handful of sailors from the *Sulphur* to make themselves useful and to mount guard. Augusta at this stage supplanted Leschenault Inlet in official favour; plans for settlement at the inlet were abandoned and the soldiers posted there were moved to Augusta in place of the *Sulphur's* men.³ Captain

¹ 'Letters of Georgina Molloy' (*W.A. Hist. Soc. Jour.*, vol. i, pt. iii).

² References in letters from Camfield and James Henty.

³ *W.A. Arch.* The four families were the Molloyes, the Bussell brothers, the Turners, and the Herrings.

Molloy, its leading settler, was put in charge. Molloy, over fifty and a veteran of the Peninsular War and of Waterloo, had arrived at Fremantle in the *Warrior* early in 1830 with his youthful bride and his sixteen servants, his tools and animals and his hive of bees, all ready to begin life as a gentleman farmer on the grant that he expected on the banks of the Swan. At the Cape, with its disturbing gossip about the small new settlement, young Mrs. Molloy had suffered some misgivings, but put them aside: as she wrote, 'I do not despair of soon leaving Swan River, if we do not find Governor Stirling's report true, which seems to be expected—not from design but ignorance of the soil.' When they arrived at the Swan, Stirling's advice sent them to the promising south; the Bussell brothers, the Turners, and the Herrings, all passengers from England in the same ship as the Molloyes, went too. The settlers, at that time about thirty in number and never to exceed a hundred, scattered along the banks of the Blackwood River and in their ignorance and enthusiasm attacked the great trees with their puny axes, so that the earth might be dug for wheat. A few months earlier, from among the comforts and congenial society of the Cape, Mrs. Molloy had written gaily, 'Molloy is a dear creature, and I would not exchange him for £10,000 and a mansion in a civilized country.' Of gentle and pious upbringing and cultured tastes, she could not picture what awaited them; nor, indeed, could Captain Molloy: but, having had all her gowns made dark and with no other ornament than tucks and hems, and her bonnets cottage-shape and without feathers, she felt equipped to face colonial life, Molloy holding her hand. She was twenty-five, very fair skinned and with quantities of fair hair; she and a girl friend had dreamt 'golden dreams' of their future reunion in the arcadian colony at the Swan. Did no one in Fremantle tremble for Georgina Molloy when she left there for uninhabited Augusta, 200 miles farther to the south? The place had beauty, and a name, but nothing more: there she was to be far not only from friends, but, until the Bussell sisters came in 1833, from any woman of her own kind. A fortnight after the party's arrival her first baby was born; there was no doctor, and mother and infant lay in a leaking tent with an umbrella to keep off the rain. Mrs. Molloy survived the ordeal, but soon the baby died—
died in my arms in this dreary land, with no one but Molloy near me

. . . language refuses to utter what I experienced. Oh! I have gone through much. . . . I thought I might have had one little bright object left to solace all the hardships and privations I endured, and had still to go through.

At first the work of settlement went well enough; houses replaced tents, their little gardens prospered, the potato crops in the small clearings grew; nor was there any trouble with the natives. When the *Sulphur* visited Augusta in the early spring, Surgeon Collie found the settlers satisfied—‘a word that says much’; on the *Sulphur*’s return to Fremantle, ship’s gossip reported that Mrs. Molloy was ‘blooming and beautiful’ once more.¹ But soon life pressed harder on the settlers, including the Molloy: food ran short; months passed without a vessel anchoring in the bay; the would-be farmers—Molloy, the soldier, John Bussell, Oxford student of classics and divinity, Turner, the London master builder, and others—were faced by square miles of unconquerable forest trees. Mrs. Molloy’s second baby, a daughter they called Sabina, was born towards the end of 1831, in that starvation period when the *Sulphur* went to Hobart Town for supplies and lingered there too long. In that hungry summer, when the settlers lived on grass and fish, Captain Molloy and John Bussell began a search for less intractable land.² It was found sixty miles to the north, across the jutting corner of the continent and close to the shores of Géographe Bay; ‘a most pleasing country’ reported Mrs. Molloy from hearsay, ‘and answering with truth to the description given of its park-like appearance, with long waving grass, and abounding in kangaroos’. Within a few years the Bussell brothers and most of the other settlers, cutting their losses, capitulated to Augusta’s trees, moving to Géographe Bay to begin again. Molloy, like the others, was given a grant there on the Vasse but as Resident Officer he was still tied to Augusta, moribund as it was; moreover, their growing affection for their holding on the Blackwood River, as well as the capital they had sunk there, postponed the Molloy’s move to the Vasse until 1839. For both, the intervening years were passed in unceasing work; only unreasoning hope, their loyalty to each other and their love for their children, kept them from despair. The friend of the ‘golden dreams’ was

¹ *Camfield* 8.9.30.

² *Cattle Chosen*, appendix.

at last told of the reality of 'this fatal Swan River expedition, fraught with continued care and deprivations';

in truth, Maggie, I have not time to say my prayers as I ought—I must unbosom myself to you, my dear girl, which I have never done—but this life is too much both for dear Molloy and myself. And what I lament is that, in his decline of life, he will have to lead a much more laborious life than he did in one and twenty years' service. . . . What goes to my heart is that dear Molloy has so much exertion bodily and mentally, but I am repaid with interest when any part I can perform eases his burden. The Lord is good and has shown Himself to us in many wonderful instances, but we are sadly forgetful of His love and bounty amid the hurried concerns of this life. Oh! my loved sister! I cannot contain myself when I think of the past.

Deprived of the Sunday ritual, the spiritual comforts, of that gentle past, she appealed for help to other friends, the clergyman who had married her, and his wife: 'Oh! do come out! Oh! do come out! This land is really calling out for someone to show us we have another life after this is passed'.

In April 1833 Fanny and Bessie Bussell arrived at Augusta; lively and impecunious daughters of a Hampshire curate long dead, they shared with Mrs. Molloy the same background of books and music and Sunday bells, of Winchester and Rugby contrived for their brothers, and boarding school, domesticity, and hobbies for themselves.¹ Before joining their brothers higher up the river they stayed a few days with Captain and Mrs. Molloy; when they landed, Mrs. Molloy—'looking so youthful and interesting'—met them with Sabina in her arms; in their room they found a blazing wood-fire, a picture of their mother borrowed for their reassurance, and a vase of sweet mignonette. During the visit the three young women evidently discussed clothes: Mrs. Molloy's mother, it seems, unable to grasp the nature of her daughter's daily tasks, sent out things that were 'too fine'; Mrs. Bussell, the curate's widow, who would know better, was commissioned to shop for Mrs. Molloy: but, said Bessie, 'altho' things are coarse, let them be genteel, and small

¹ *Bussell Letters*, from the originals in *W.A. Arch.* Use has also been made of the extracts given in *Cattle Chosen*. The Bussell family moved from Augusta to the Vasse in Nov. 1835 and Jan. 1836, largely by means of the schooner *Sally Ann* (*Cattle Chosen*, pp. 64–65, 80), which between those dates became the property of Stephen Henty.

patterns and not many colours'. The Bussell sisters brought a light touch to life at Augusta until they followed the other settlers to the Vasse.

When the Molloyes had been three years at Augusta another daughter was born; to add to their difficulties their one woman servant, wife of one of the indentured men, after 'the most awful and alarming fits' had become too ill to work: the once lovely Mrs. Molloy was now, as she herself said, skin and bone. Her husband helped her 'much, and more than many would do'; but twice the affairs of the struggling settlement took him to Perth and in his absences there or at the Vasse still further duties fell to his wife. In the summer of 1833-4—the summer of the *Thistle's* call—he went away on a visit that lengthened against his will from weeks to months; in this emergency Mrs. Molloy, self-doubting, disliking a conspicuous part, had to rise to occasion as best she could. There were their crops to be harvested and stacked, and every grain was needed, since this year most of Augusta's wheat failed; Mrs. Molloy, recognizing the dreaded smut balls in the seed wheat, had treated it before sowing and thus saved their own supplies. When the poor mad servant died it was Mrs. Molloy who had to see to the torchlit burial of the diseased and dreadful corpse. The natives, still in these early days on good terms with the settlers, were nevertheless incorrigible thieves; in the absence of the only officer, her husband, Mrs. Molloy had to arrange for the sergeant and a guard to watch the farm dwellings up the river, and the stock. A few weeks later the natives grew bolder and she had to defend Sabina and herself. Intent on getting the potatoes growing in her garden, a crowd of twenty or thirty natives, men and women, came to her veranda. The men were armed; one boldly jostled her, shaking his spears, whizzing his stick about her head, poking her face with greased and earthy fingers and pulling at Sabina, who was in her mother's arms. Trembling, Mrs. Molloy smiled and pretended courage, calling meantime to the only servant on the premises, busy with his wife in the kitchen that was some way off; when the natives turned to the servant, an old soldier whose face at this dangerous moment became as white as his mistress's own, Mrs. Molloy remembered her husband's firearms and laid his pistol and rifle where they would be seen. Observing these, the natives went off to threaten and steal

from the Bussell sisters, at the time even less protected than Mrs. Molloy. Fanny 'flew round to Mrs. Molloy'; Dawson, the servant, was at once dispatched, the soldiers turned out, and by threats of shot and bayonet the booty—two glittering glass salt cellars—was restored. But for Dawson, Mrs. Molloy was certain that, on her own premises, murder would have been done.

She found her husband's absence agonizing; when the day cooled, taking Sabina, she would go down to the beach and while the child played would look towards Cape Leeuwin, watching for the masts of a vessel that might bring him in. When at last one came she was 'almost dead of expectation', but he was not on board; there was only a quantity of correspondence for him that, together with her own, had to be answered before a fair wind took the vessel from the bay. Now, she wondered that she had ever thought herself busy before: as she drove her pen along and looked at the loads of needle-work untouched, she was utterly overpowered; for in the spring there was to be another baby and there was 'not a cap to put on the child's head'. At last the Captain returned, wearing his old green rifle jacket with the Waterloo ribbon, and 'looking quite fat from the gentlemanly life he had been leading at Perth'.

Not skilled with the needle, and disliking the drudgery of baking and churning that filled so much of the day, Mrs. Molloy yet came to love the isolated home that compelled these tasks; the climate was heavenly, the river, bay and forest beautiful, and here their children had been born. After several years she could speak of it as 'dear Augusta', and however much at that time she might have been tempted to leave it for the Old World she could not bear to abandon it for the Vasse. Here on the banks of the Blackwood River she had created a garden; vines had sprouted from raisin seeds, fig-trees from slips packed for the voyage in tanner's bark, peach-trees from stones brought from the Cape; orange nasturtiums lit their dwelling's rustic verandah, and its window frames were draped with a purple native creeper and a pink climber from the Isle of France. In the 'happy celestial days' in her native Cumberland or in Scotland with her friends, she had been devoted to botany; expecting to have plenty of spare time in the colony she had brought with her a *Hortus Siccus*, or book for the arrangement of

dried plants. But there was no spare time, and in any case there was nobody to tell her the names of the strange plants that grew at her door. The only informed person she ever met with at Augusta was a now 'lamented Mr. Collie', and his visits had been so fleeting that there was no chance to learn from him the knowledge that she sought. Few in the colony bestowed a thought on flowers: 'grubbing-hoes, beef, pork, potatoes, onions, anchors, and anchorage, whaling, harpooning, are the chief topics of conversation,' . . . and she did not like to turn the talk to interests of her own. And so the new and astonishing botanical world in which she lived remained for some years a closed book. Then, grief and a stranger together opened the book for her and taught her to read.

When the Molloyes had been seven years at Augusta they were stricken by that most bitter sorrow, the death of a child. After their two daughters, Sabina and Mary Dorothea, a son was born; at nineteen months he fell into a well and was drowned. A few months before this happening Mrs. Molloy had been astonished to receive a large box and a letter from someone in England who was unknown to both her husband and herself. This was Captain James Mangles, a middle-aged naval officer on half-pay, a man of leisure, a noted traveller and amateur botanist;¹ the same Captain Mangles who had visited the Swan as a fellow passenger of Charlotte Carter in the *Atwick* in 1831. His gift to Mrs. Molloy was 'a particularly choice box of seeds', with 'a polite note requesting a return of the native seeds of Augusta; the note apparently did not divulge on whose advice Captain Mangles acted. Mystified, Mrs. Molloy wrote, 'What can have led you, my dear Sir to have selected me as a collector, much more to imagine I had botanical knowledge, I cannot divine'. He had been led by a suggestion from his cousin, Lady Stirling, as Mrs. Molloy later learned. There seems no doubt that the two young women had met, first probably in Perth in those days of 1830 when their husbands had been much together, consulting about land, and again when the *Sulphur*, with the Stirlings on board, had called at Augusta the next year on the way to King George's Sound. This was in November 1831, the month of Sabina's birth; at such a time Mrs. Stirling, with her lively sympathy, would have been very welcome to the

¹ O'Byrne.

homesick Mrs. Molloy: here was a guest happy to talk of other matters than potatoes and whales. Moving among the Swan River settlers, Mrs. Stirling must have come to realize that woman cannot, any more than man, live happily by bread and toil alone; her suggestion to her cousin was perhaps made less for the sake of Captain Mangles than of Mrs. Molloy. At first Mrs. Molloy was somewhat taken aback; delighted with the 'magnificent present of so many long wished for seeds', she doubted if she would be able to make an adequate return, for she did not know the names of any of the native plants and confessed that, fond as she was of gardening, she had always avoided the tedious operation of gathering seeds. However, as it was the proper season, she and Captain Molloy set to work at once and filled and dispatched a small box of seeds, flowers, and dried plants, nameless, but with descriptions attached; they kept the large box to be filled when Mrs. Molloy was 'blest with more leisure than I have at present'. That leisure came soon, and for the anguishing reason that the boy's death had set much of her time free. Next season the big box was filled and Mrs. Molloy wrote again; this time there was none of the formality, the almost reluctance, of her first letter; indeed, it was a cry from the heart: for she found she could not begin to talk to him of botany until she had first unburdened herself of the dreadful story of their loss—of the morning when, missed for a few minutes, the child had been found floating in the well hidden behind a mimosa tree a stone's throw from the house. Augusta's doctor was absent at the Vasse; had he been there to help the distraught parents and the servant girl, Mrs. Molloy was certain that their Johnnie could have been revived. . . . She apologized for writing to him, a stranger, with such freedom. Cut off as they were from the world, and from all the ways and occupations of their former lives, she and her husband had become absorbed in their children: remembering this, Captain Mangles would understand.

And now, as she told him, her leisure was daily employed in his service. When the boy had died in November the brilliancy of spring was over, but Mrs. Molloy, with the help of her little daughters, collected enough different sorts of flowers to more than fill the *Hortus Siccus* sent in anticipation by the captain with his box. In December and January the laborious procedure

of gathering, cleaning, and packing the matured and perfect seeds was discharged 'faithfully and zealously', though, from inexperience, not as cleanly and neatly as Mrs. Molloy could desire; her second attempt should be more satisfactory to them both. The work of those weeks, carried on with her mind, her eyes, and fingers while all the time she battled inwardly with her grief, had inspired her with 'ardour and interest' in the native plants:

I do . . . cordially thank you for being the cause of my immediate acquaintance with their nature and variety . . . but for your request, I should have bestowed on the flowers of this wilderness only passing admiration.

Collecting for him had been a family affair: Molloy had brought plants from the Vasse, and another time had stopped work for a whole day to join her and the children in their search. The children—aged six and four—'bereft of most of the amusements of a highly civilized country' entered with zest into the pursuit;

their eyes being so much nearer the ground, they have been able to detect many minute specimens and seeds I could not observe. . . . We have had three or four gypsy parties on your account with which Sabina and Mary were much delighted. . . . Even before my darling child's death we went three times up to the granite rock and opposite side [of the river] for flowers, and I have not been in a boat before for three years. . . . Indeed, my dear Sir, I have been more frequently from my home in making up your collection than in the whole of the nearly eight years we have lived at Augusta.

Raising plants from the seed Captain Mangles had sent demanded much attention; it was a work she loved, and for it, she confessed, she had neglected other concerns;

Often has Molloy looked at a buttonless shirt and exclaimed with a woe-begone visage 'When will Captain Mangles's seed be sown?' All English flowers possess more brilliancy of colour in this delightful climate. Were Captain Molloy a rich man, I should incur great expense in ordering numberless flowers, plants and shrubs. As it is, I must be guided by prudence. . . . But the shrubs and seed I subjoin in the list I have obtained his permission to send for—at the same time telling him that he has no milliner's bills to pay, therefore may very well spare me a little indulgence in what is more beautiful and durable. You must not think from this that Captain Molloy is

parsimonious: quite the reverse, but great prudence is required when heavy and un contemplated losses have been experienced.

She was anxious for blue flowers, and flowers with scent; she enclosed a small cheque on Captain Molloy's agent for the purchase of

a garden rake fit for a lady's use, as I am obliged to borrow one of Molloy's with the most formidable teeth . . . a watering pot and rose would be of greatest use to us, as ours are worn and destroyed after eight years' service.

She wrote in January 1838; by March the big box was packed, ready for the colonial schooner, *Champion*, expected hourly on her last visit for some time. The *Champion* did not come; nor, for months, did any other vessel, for the settlement was now practically extinct.¹ To Mrs. Molloy's despair letter and box lay at Augusta until near the end of the year. By then some of the box's contents, 'collected under the extremes of joy and sorrow', had punctually bloomed. By then, also, Mrs. Molloy felt a little chagrined with Captain Mangles: here it was, the end of 1838, and she had had no acknowledgment of her letter of March 1837, her first; after its 'silent reception' she was 'reluctant again to address him' and did so only because she felt that her own apparent neglect must be explained. Two lines sufficed for the explanation, but her pen ran on. Writing with the infant Amelia on her knee, she told him how she had trembled lest, after all her care, the seeds should fail; how

When I ramble with my little children running like butterflies from flower to flower, every one I behold is fraught with the associations of those I have collected for Captain Mangles, and then the galling remembrance that the seeds are still at Augusta makes me quite sad.

She mentioned a serious illness earlier in the year, and the birth of a third daughter in June; and she bewailed the loss during her illness of her *Gardener's Magazine* and the *Transactions of the Horticultural Society*, both eaten by white ants. She described her garden, gay with the white lily, *Letium candidum*, the pink gladiolus from the Cape, single pinks of every hue, Captain Mangles's dark nasturtiums, mignonette, geraniums, and very

¹ John Bussell, 19.1.38, when he said there were then only fourteen people left at Augusta. The settlement never revived.

many more; she asked if he would kindly procure her some seeds of the *Hibiscus Althaea Fontex*, of the horse chestnut and the *Magnolia Conspicua*: and finally confided that 'Baby thinks I have written too long a letter. Lest you should form the same opinion, I conclude.'

'This dreary land', long since 'dear Augusta', was now 'this pleasant retreat' from which she was to be torn. For it was to be finally abandoned; the forest had won. Early in 1839 Captain and Mrs. Molloy joined the other settlers on the Vasse. Their goods and chattels were carried round the Leeuwin in an American whaler; the whaler's captain took the party thirty miles up the Blackwood, where horses awaited them, and from there they rode. Sabina and Mary followed their parents on donkeys and the baby was carried in her mother's arms. From Mrs. Molloy's saddle hung a basket containing her favourite plants and shrubs: feeling desolate as banished Eve, she had dug them up from her garden the night before, Milton's lines running through her head: 'Must I thus leave thee Paradise? . . . these happy walks and shades. . . . O flowers, that never will in other climate, grow . . . which I bred up with tender hand from opening bud . . .'. Her going was not lonely: Captain Molloy was as sad as herself.

Their bivouac on the river was farther than she had travelled in ten years; three more days of slow travel took them the rest of the way to the Vasse. Their grant was two miles from the sea; the land all round was flat, and her 'mountain-loving eye' looked in vain for a feature, a rise, or a hill: the change was terrible. But among the grey-green peppermint trees Captain Molloy built a house, and they made the house a home, with a bunch of wild flowers on the table, low fire-stools for the little girls, and a piano for Mrs. Molloy to play on when she sang 'Buy a Broom' and 'The Bonny Briar Bush' to the children after tea. They called it Fairlawn; there was no garden, but in the spring there were wild flowers of such astonishing loveliness that even Augusta's were outshone. And in the summer the long-looked-for letter from Captain Mangles arrived. Already a year old, it brought news of the success of her collection of seeds and specimens; more, that among certain professional botanists her skill as a collector had earned her some small fame. For Captain Mangles had shared his treasures with Dr. Lindley, Fellow of

the Royal Society and Professor of Botany at University College, London, and author of *Ladies' Botany* and other works; with Mr. Long, Director of London's Zoological Gardens; and Mr. Joseph Paxton, doyen of ornamental gardens, curator of the Chatsworth collections and manager of the Duke of Devonshire's Derbyshire estates. Mrs. Molloy had brought new, beautiful, and exciting additions to their collections; Mr. Paxton, then engaged in building the great conservatory 300 feet long that was the forerunner of his Crystal Palace, felt himself highly favoured. There were, he wrote,

some splendid things in the Hortus Siccus of Port Augusta, comprising many new species of *Hovea*, *Chorizema*, *Daviesia*, *Boronia*, *Epacris*, and *Kennedya* . . . and many other fine plants which appear to be new.

As to the seeds, they were 'far superior to any that we have received at Chatsworth'. And amongst the seeds that had vegetated successfully were those of 'the Floral Gem which the infant botanist, Sabina Molloy, took so much pains to watch and collect' and that, according to her father's wish, had been given her name. These distinguished men had been allowed to read Mrs. Molloy's letters: 'My dear Captain', wrote Professor Lindley,

Your friend, Mrs. Molloy, is really the most charming personage in South Australia, and you the most fortunate man to have such a correspondent. That many of her plants are beautiful you can see for yourself. I am delighted to add, many of the best are quite new. I have marked with an X the seeds we shall be most grateful for.

Captain Mangles did not fail to perceive in Mrs. Molloy's letters her hunger for instruction for herself and the children, for the pleasures of talk, of question and answer and speculation, of which she was deprived; he chose from the London bookshops the best food for both parents and children that he could find. His letter and a large box of books took a year to reach the Vasse. In January 1840, Mrs. Molloy wrote

Words fail me when I attempt to return you my grateful thanks and acknowledgements for its useful, beautiful and handsome contents. I stood quite amazed when Captain Molloy took out the different things, wondering at your disinterested liberality and kindness to those whom you had never seen and who are not able to make any

adequate return. The books are invaluable and most admirably selected, so many of them that I have so long wished for, and what we should ourselves have purchased had opportunity occurred. Uncle Phillip's *Conversations* I saw named in the *Quarterly*, and had set down with 'The Language of Flowers', Parley's 'Conversations', and some others in a list. . . . Among the new publications I greatly desired to see 'The Greenhouse', but knew both it and Keith on 'Prophecy' were too expensive, and, therefore, abandoned the idea of ever possessing them. By these facts you will be able to perceive the extent of your bounty upon us isolated beings. . . . In my few stolen moments of leisure I run to my box of treasures and take a glance at some of the books. . . . I often, after a day spent in servile drudgery, from the want of domestics, sit down quite exhausted with one of your beauteous presents in my hand, when I receive great refreshment and great relaxation.

From a note in 'Parley' she learnt that it was Captain Mangles who had introduced the dark red China rose to the Swan; wondering what was its origin, she had planted one on Johnnie's grave at Augusta and three bushes of it in their embryo garden at the Vasse.

Not long after she wrote a fourth daughter was born; Mrs. Molloy's health was flagging, but nevertheless in their due seasons her tasks for Captain Mangles went on:

Molloy cannot forbear smiling at the unparalleled devotion of all my spare moments to this all engrossing concern, and the frequent mention made of Captain Mangles and the Specimens.

Once the Molloyes entertained a professional naturalist under their roof. Hearing from Governor Hutt, Stirling's successor, that a trained German collector, Ludwig Preiss, was in the colony gathering specimens for various European museums, Mrs. Molloy invited him to visit Fairlawn, hoping for botanical instruction for herself and specimens for Captain Mangles. Preiss came and stayed a month and on departure presented his expectant hostess with some of the results of his work at the Vasse: professional he might be, but his specimens were 'so rough and ungainly' that Mrs. Molloy 'could not deface the *Hortus Siccus* with them'. To mount them separately on stiff paper, she begged a 'forbidding old log book' from one of the American whalers that now frequented the tranquil waters of Géographe Bay:

I do not know how the specimens will arrive, but at least they will afford amuzement to your botanical friends, and will, I believe, be the first in Britain from this part of the world. My anxiety that you should possess them rouses all my energy to prepare them for embarkation. . . . The seeds Dr. Lindley wished for I obtained from Augusta as far as I could. I would with all my heart have ridden over myself for them, and really have liked nothing better, as being in the bush is to me one of the most delightful states of existence, free from every household care, my husband and children about me.

And on such family rambles the thought that she was 'employed in the delightful service of so kind a friend made me feel singularly happy and free from care'. In her letters she could now speak of the native plants by their musical botanical names: *Verticordia*, *Pimelia spectabilis*, *Melaleuca*, *Mitrosideros*; she reported puzzles solved, little discoveries made, and evidence that she had 'almost panted for' finally found: she was, she said, no longer working blindfold. And in her flower-garden, laid out before her windows with geometrical precision by Molloy, the seeds and plants that Captain Mangles continued to send flourished with the aid of his *Marnock's Magazine*; Marnock

is so universal in its remarks and gives the most approved and modern culture of new plants. I take it up as a *bonne bouche* the last thing at night when the house is in deep repose.

Soon, the books no longer needed to be put away in their boxes after use; for Captain Mangles had followed his 'manifold gifts' by sending shelves to hold them.

In December 1841 the Molloyes received a visit from Governor Hutt and the Revd. John Wollaston, a clergyman lately come with his wife and grown-up family to the Leschenault district, where a settlement called Bunbury was being attempted at last.¹ Mr. Wollaston, riding ahead of the Governor, got to the Vasse first; he was in time to share with three American whaling captains an excellent early outdoor breakfast of hot rolls and a round of beef. The Molloyes were without a servant of any kind; Mrs. Molloy and nine-year old Sabina had cooked the meal. Mr. Wollaston, newly from England, noted the broken thatch and the unglazed windows;

yet our entertainment, the style of manners of our host and hostess, their dress and conversation, all conspired to show that genuine

¹ Wollaston, pp. 35, 36.

good breeding and gentlemanly deportment are not always lost sight of among English emigrants.

He noted also that Captain and Mrs. Molloy felt their position deeply themselves; he

could not help remarking to the Governor one morning, as Mrs. Molloy passed in our view from the house to the kitchen, with the dinner dishes in one hand and her youngest daughter without shoes or stockings, in the other, how distressing and laborious must be the female emigrant's lot, who has in her native country been used even to the common comforts and plain cleanliness of genteel life.

Later, when Mr. Wollaston learnt to know Mrs. Molloy better, he was scarcely able to find words to describe her excellencies; he declared to a clerical colleague¹ that she was 'the best informed, the most accomplished, the most elegant, the most lady-like woman that ever came into this Colony'.

In April 1842 Mrs. Molloy wrote her last letter to Captain Mangles; she sent him 'the small, small harvest' of the elusive *Nuytsia* seed that was all she had been able to collect; 'I have twice sent a native, once a white man and native, gone four times out myself, twice with a servant and twice with Molloy, and yet as you see the Result!'

A few months later, Mr. Wollaston was hailed by Alfred Bussell arriving at Bunbury at a gallop to get help for Mrs. Molloy, thirty miles away. She had just been confined with a fifth daughter, she was dangerously ill, and the doctor at the Vasse was drunk. Skilled help reached her many hours later, just in time, it was at first thought, to save her; but it was not so. Later accounts described her as suffering greatly; she was labouring under great distress of mind; her back was one mass of sores. Mr. Wollaston was anxious to help and at Captain Molloy's request he wrote to comfort her, and wrote again; but his letters did not, he said, seem to draw her out. If necessary he was prepared to leave his local labours as farmer and pastor for the three or four days needed if he was to carry spiritual help in person to Mrs. Molloy. Meantime, he sent letters and medicine, and was concerned to hear that in her misery she longed for a hydrostatic bed:

how we are to contrive such a thing here I know not. Every modern

¹ The *Diary of Matthew Blagdon Hale*, then Archdeacon of Adelaide, later first Bishop of Perth (1856) (*W.A. Arch.*).

contrivance for the relief of the sick and bedridden is required here, as elsewhere, but no one ever thinks of bringing out these things. Mrs. Molloy will lose her life for want of nursing.

A water-bed was made by Captain Molloy and the surgeon, but broke down at once, 'which was worse than if it had not been tried, because the disturbance and disappointment to the poor sufferer . . . was great'. A second was then successfully contrived by a ship's carpenter from a recipe in Dr. Arnold's *Penny Magazine*, Mr. Wollaston contributing his new mackintosh cloak: at last Mrs. Molloy was without pain, as she herself assured Mr. Wollaston next day. For he was now at her side, watching for an undrugged hour to give him the opportunity for prayer and for 'drawing her mind to the all important duty of setting her house in order'. At her own wish, she received the Sacrament, her husband with her; a week later, she was dead.

Mr. Wollaston had considered Mrs. Molloy would die for want of nursing; she died for want of a great many things over a number of years: in truth, from the privations and hazards of a first settler's wife.

Captain Molloy, dying at the Vasse at the age of nearly ninety, outlived his wife by thirty years.¹

¹ A few years after Mrs. Molloy's death Hale was touring Western Australia with Adelaide's Bishop Short and visited the Vasse. He found it peculiarly interesting to talk with the veteran 'Colonel' Molloy: but, as his diary records (2.11.48) 'however much one's interest may be excited with regard to himself, it is called forth a hundred times more with regard to his family. This family consists of five daughters who although living in the most complete seclusion possess a grace and dignity and ease of manner which would do honour to the most refined society, to say nothing of their being, both great and small, strikingly handsome. In fact to come to a thorough bush settlement and then to find oneself in the midst of such a family produces within one no ordinary sensations. One is touched with admiration and delight on the one hand and at the same time one laments that the circle of their acquaintance should be so limited.' Almost at once, the circle was to be greatly enlarged: a few weeks after Hale wrote those words he made seventeen-year-old Sabina his second wife and the stepmother of his two young daughters. After the marriage he took Sabina's four sisters away with them to Adelaide, while Captain Molloy visited England; so Sabina began her married life with a household of six little girls. Of Georgina's daughters,

Sabina m. Archdeacon Mathew Hale, 30.12.48;

Mary Dorothea m. Lieutenant E. F. Ducane, R.E. (later Sir Edmund Ducane), 1856;

Amelia m. William Richardson Bunbury (son of Lady Richardson Bunbury, who came to the Leschenault district from Ireland with her family in the early 40's);

Flora m. William Brockman (2nd son of W. L. Brockman);

Georgina d. unmarried.

THOMAS HENTY AT SWAN RIVER

ONCE round the Leeuwin and past Cape Naturaliste, Thomas was in sight of the country where his own large grant lay. Its character was the crux of his problem, but he did not pause for a closer glimpse: at Leschenault Inlet itself there was now nothing to be seen but the long-deserted military encampment, and even Thomas's energies would not have been equal to the rough tramp to the grant, many miles from the sea. The *Thistle* anchored at Fremantle on the last Sunday in January, just after Thomas's fifty-ninth birthday, suitably celebrated, it is certain, by all on board. The vessel's arrival received more than the usual announcement in the *Perth Gazette* (1.2.34):

By the *Thistle* from Launceston we have received our files of Van Diemen's Land journals; from Launceston up to 28th November and from Hobart Town to the 15th. . . . We are happy to find that Mr. Thomas Henty the father of the Gentlemen who came to this Colony amongst some of our first settlers, and were induced to leave it from private motives, has at length taken the opportunity of visiting us. He has been heard to express great astonishment at our advanced state, considering the short period the Colony has been established—and as he purposes to take a general view of the country before he leaves, we hope to hear an equally favorable opinion of our natural capabilities.

Thomas was not likely to make his survey from a Perth veranda; Edward went over the hills to York and his father probably went with him, and to the Upper Swan, the Helena, and the Canning, all now accessible enough even to one much less inquisitive and enterprising than he. No doubt he was everywhere pleasantly received, however resentfully settlers, and officials too, may have criticized the departure of James. Stirling was still absent from the colony, delayed on his long voyage back from England;¹ Irwin had at last gone on leave and Captain

¹ Stirling eventually came back in Aug. 1834, with a knighthood and 'in excellent spirits', having 'succeeded in most of the objects that led him to undertake the expedition to England' (Arthur to Bourke, 10.7.34, *M.L.*); Stirling's letter was

Richard Daniell, senior officer of the 63rd, was acting as lieutenant-governor. Perth society of the time had been described recently by Fanny Bussell in letters written to England soon after her arrival in the West in April 1833, and while waiting for an opportunity to join her brothers at Augusta: it was on a delightful footing, no formality yet a strict adherence to all that is right and nice. . . . The society has not degenerated in the least and instead of anyone or anything for the Swan I should say selectness and refinement are more prevalent than in England. Yet no one scruples to assist in the ménage.

The capital's gaiety had quite broken down the hermit habits of her brother Charles; during a visit there not long before the *Thistle* arrived he found that

hospitality is indeed the order of the day. Dinner parties, routs and even balls were given at which I was invariably present and altho in a philosophical vein I had often talked of the absurdity of dancing I mingled in the crowd and much enjoyed myself.

Unfortunately the crowd was very largely composed of gentlemen; as Charles Bussell observed,

There is a sad sad dearth of females however for such amusements. We mustered four ladies, just enough you know to form one set and one more at the instrument. This constituted the whole residing within many miles but of these there was only one single: and she it is reported will not remain so for long.¹

If at Perth and Fremantle the sociable Thomas found much to enliven and please, the accessible country seemed to him poor indeed. In moving about he found the farmers much disturbed at the disastrous results of smut in their wheat—but that blight was familiar to Thomas and one for which he considered he had a cure.² It was the pests nobody could deal with that left him

written from King George's Sound, where contrary winds delayed him on the passage from England for two months. Fellow passengers with Stirling and his wife in the *James Pattison* were Mrs. Bussell and her daughter Mary, both, according to Charles Bussell, 'uncommonly fastidious at first after leaving luxurious *James Pattison*'. Another passenger was Patrick Taylor, who settled at the Sound and later married Mary Bussell (18.9.37).

¹ Charles Bussell, 3.11.33.

² Thomas Henty, anxious to help the afflicted farmers, sent the *Perth Gazette* 'the following very simple cure' used by himself for thirty years 'with complete success' (*Perth Gazette* 8.3.34). It is of interest to learn what was practised by a skilled farmer of that day:

dismayed—the drought, the heat, and the sand. Instead of the favourable opinion hoped for by the *Gazette*, his view—as he did not refrain from telling the settlers themselves—was that to attempt agriculture was useless unless or until they could discover the existence of good pastoral land. As he wrote to William (but did not divulge to the settlers) he would not take a million acres at the Swan for the land he had seen at Portland Bay.

Did it surprise Thomas, when he had been three weeks at the Swan, to be told that his son Stephen had anchored in the Roads? They had not seen each other for over a year; Stephen, arriving in the Tamar from the Swan the previous December, found that his father and Edward had sailed on their way to the Swan just two weeks before. He wasted no time, but set off in the Hentys' cutter *Fanny*, 36 tons, and navigated her to Fremantle himself.¹ There must have been much exchanging of news and comparing of notes, and between Stephen and Edward discussion of the

'Put four bushels of clean wheat in a heap, take a sufficient quantity of fresh boiling water in a common bucket, leaving room to fill up with a gallon of *good* lime, stir it well: when the lime is dissolved reduce it by adding cold water to bring it below scalding heat, pour it upon the top of the heap—shovel up round the bottom, and throw it to the top until the mixture ceases to run away from the bottom; turn it into a fresh heap until it is thoroughly mixed, leave it in this state till the following morning, it is then fit for sowing. If the seed is smutty pour it gently into cold water, carefully skimming off the smut balls, and the kernels that have the chaff on, stir it well with a scrub broom—the water should be changed at least three times, dry it in the sun, and prepare it as before stated.'

Henty ended his recipe with a warning:

'It is not to be presumed that this will be an effectual cure *where wheat is sown in succession*. It is considered in England bad husbandry, and to *generate smut*. In all harvests, more or less corn will shake out—will vegetate with the wheat sown and produce smut in the crop. If wheat follows wheat, it would be better to sow it upon a *second furrow*, harrowing the ground after the first, and allowing the kernels of the corn shaken out to vegetate before the second ploughing, or seed furrow.'

In the opinion of Mr. A. R. Raw, cereal geneticist at Victoria's Research Farm, Werribee, Henty's recipe was sound at least in part, though not always for the reasons his letter gives. Farmers of today, Mr. Raw says, support Henty's recommendation of skimming to remove smut balls; and though science has disproved his belief in soil infection, for other reasons it has long condemned successive planting of the same crop in the same field. Wheat-growers, armed today with spore-destroying copper sulphate and formalin, may smile at Henty's faith in lime, a faith shared by many farmers of his time, among them perhaps Mrs. Molloy; but how was he to know that the undoubted success of his war on smut was not due to lime but to the use of hot water and to the removal of the spores by the mechanical process of shaking them off the infected seed?

¹ *Perth Gazette*, 22.2.34.

imported merchandise offered in their joint names for sale at their Fremantle store. Among other things the *Fanny* had brought tea in chests, 6s. a pound, or 5s. 6d. if two chests were bought. *Thistle's* cargo had consisted almost entirely of the following acceptable articles of clothing, building materials, food, and drink:

Window Glass 8 × 10, 10 × 12

New Zealand Rope, from 2½ in. to three thread at 10 per lb.

Shingles

Batten and Flooring Nails

Imperial Steel yards

Mould candles, in boxes, at 1s. and 1s. 2d. per lb.

Tallow, in casks of 5 cwt., 65s. per cwt.

Muskets, 30s. each

Oats, 8s. per bushel

Kangaroo skins, 48s. per dozen

Beaver Hats (drab) 30s. each

A variety of Slops, Hosiery, Fans, Tooth Nail Hair and Shaving Brushes

Prints, Blankets, Counterpanes, Sheeting, Table Cloths

China Desert Service, £5. 5s.

A Large variety of Haberdashery

Boots and Shoes

Superior Sherry, in cases of 3 dozen, 40s. per doz.

Taylor's Brown Stout, £8. 8s. per hd.

French Vinegar, 5s. per gallon

Jamaica Rum in puncheons¹

Thomas and Edward stayed seven weeks. Early in March they sailed in the *Thistle*, carrying mails for the Sound and Launceston² and paying a second visit to Portland Bay. Long before this Thomas knew that, in leaving the *Swan*, James had been right: Edward now had his father's full support for the plan to move across Bass Strait.

¹ *Perth Gazette*, 22.2.34.

² *Ibid.* 15.3.34.

Part VII

LAUNCESTON TO PORTLAND
BAY

1834-1837



I

OFFICIAL APPROACH

THOMAS and Edward were away from Launceston for five months. When they arrived back at the end of April 1834, James was not there; he had sailed some weeks earlier for England to interview the Colonial Office about Thomas's new proposal, a plan to buy 20,000 acres on the south coast of the mainland on terms that would spread the purchase cost over ten years. In reality it was, of course, a family plan, not necessarily originated by Thomas, but approved by him and justly standing over his name. From something said later by James, it can be inferred that they must all have agreed upon the terms before Thomas left for the Swan; Thomas's coastal voyage was undertaken for his own complete conviction and to enable him to decide the exact spot where the 20,000 acres would most profitably lie. The proposal was set forth in a memorial to H.M. Government, sent, as was proper, through Governor Arthur and forwarded by Arthur with a letter to the Under-Secretary of State, R. W. Hay.¹ Thomas might reasonably have been expected home in time to sign the memorial himself and to wish James *bon voyage*; one pictures James, all ready to set sail with wife and child, waiting until the last moment and then deciding that the memorial must be signed by himself on behalf of Thomas and sent to Arthur in Hobart Town for transmission to England without further delay. So he signed it, sent it to the Governor with a letter from himself, and set off on 16 March in

¹ Memorial (*Hobart Arch.*).

barque *Forth* to be on the spot when the papers should reach London and the under-secretary's desk.

The memorial began with the statement, by now more than familiar to Mr. Hay, that having sold his English property in the expectation of obtaining land under the 1830 regulations Thomas and his seven sons were, by the new regulations, 'shut out of land'; in consequence, Thomas had been 'compelled to hire land within the Colony at an exorbitant Rent and is now not so well off as he was in England'; that, having also suffered severe and unexpected losses at Swan River, he hoped that the present proposition would receive favourable consideration, 'more especially as it is founded upon the system of selling Land which is now invariably adopted in the Colonies'. Then followed a paragraph about explorations carried out by Thomas and his sons:

Your Memorialist with the aid of his sons has made several excursions on the South Coast of New Holland altogether apart from any settled part of the Country. During these periodical visits they have found out Islands, Rivers, Head Lands and made various other Geographical discoveries which have not been laid down in any Chart or Map hitherto published he has also ascertained that many parts of the South Coast is faced with Land to a considerable extent well calculated for sheep, a great portion of which Your Memorialist conceives can be made available by industrious Settlers. With this opinion, both himself and his Sons are desirous of settling on some portion of this Country, and without asking or requiring any protection from the Government or causing it to incur any expense whatever.

—a shrewd anticipation of one of the main grounds on which official objection was likely to be based. Then came the details of the plan. Thomas proposed that

himself and each of his sons be permitted to purchase from Government Two Thousand Five Hundred acres of Land at Five Shillings per acre such Land to be selected by themselves between the parallels of 135 and 145 degrees of East Longitude under such restrictions as may be thought necessary. That being the first to settle in the Country greater expenses and greater difficulties will have to be encountered which will deprive them of a certain portion of their Capital and this capital they will require to enable them to bring the Land into profitable cultivation—on these grounds they ask, on payment of a deposit of Five per Cent. they be permitted to have a credit of Ten

Years to pay the remainder of the purchase Money, to be secured by Mortgage on the Land bearing Interest @ Five per Cent.

The lack of any reference to a specific spot within the parallels named suggests that when framing the memorial—done *before* Thomas's own voyage—Thomas wished to leave himself a free choice; it could also mean that they preferred not to advertise their most likely choice, Portland Bay. That Portland Bay was the only definite area in their minds, even at this time, is abundantly clear from allusions in letters. Why then did their request cover territory farther west than Spencer's Gulf?

From their first colonial years the Hentys, as appears from various family papers, were genuinely anxious to treat the natives fairly and with kindness; they must have abhorred the attitude of those Van Diemen's Land colonists who used man traps and advocated shooting down 'the crows'—or such of them as had survived the thirty years of invasion of black territory by whites. How to protect the remaining blacks, now inevitably a nuisance and often a danger to the settlers, was one of Governor Arthur's chief problems. Since Thomas could not hope for consideration at the Colonial Office without Arthur's support, the inclusion of the next paragraph was not only pertinent but diplomatic:

Your Memorialist begs further to state that in forming Settlements in the Colonies, the Settler and the Aborigines have generally come into hostile collision, and mutual acts of aggression have been the consequence; in this respect your Memorialist feels himself perfectly safe, four of his Sons having had considerable experience in the management and treatment of the natives at Spencer's Gulf, Swan River and King George's Sound, at which latter place they are better managed and under better control than in most others. A son of your Memorialist was living within Three miles of the Settlement at King George's Sound between one and two Years, in the midst of which Tribes of Aborigines [he was] totally unprotected and such was the good feeling kept up between them, that no instance of misconduct occurred among them, they were taught to labour for, and earn the food with which they are occasionally supplied.

The experience thus gained he hopes will be considered a sufficient guarantee that the same system can be pursued in other places and that by proper management the views of His Majesty's Government in establishing friendly intercourse and mutual good feeling with the Aborigines on the South Coast may be facilitated.

A last inducement was an offer by Thomas to cede the Swan River grant: if the Government would agree to his request he would at once abandon his order for 80,000 acres of land in Western Australia—‘which will show that the object of your Memorialist is not to become a Land Jobber but a real and bona fide Settler’. He closed with information that his eldest son was on the point of proceeding to England and will have the honour to lay before his Majesty’s Government such information as he may possess respecting the South Coast of New Holland.

At the time, it probably seemed unfortunate to the eldest son that he had to sign the memorial for his absent father; it did not look well. In his own name he wrote a covering letter to Arthur ‘venturing to recommend’ the proposal

as a Plan which without in any way prejudicing the interests of other parties or interfering with the view of His Majesty’s Government may afford our family an opportunity by their own exertions of doing some good for themselves.

The rest of his letter was concerned with the family’s fitness to deal with natives; like Thomas, and presumably for the same reasons, James enlarged on the native problem, always present in Arthur’s mind, instancing King George’s Sound and John’s experience there as a model for settlers in unknown country.

My Brother (who was occasionally called ‘King Henty’) used chiefly to employ them either to hunt Kangaroo, Fish, or carry parcels to the Settlement, a distance of Three Miles and various other occupations of a similar kind. They generally dislike manual labor unless it is in some way connected with their former way of life. Instances of Theft or bad conduct are generally punished by forbidding the offender to come near the Settlers for a Week or Month according to the nature of the offence and this has been found to have a very salutary effect on the rest.

The treatment they would experience from us would be that of kindness accompanied by firmness from a conviction that no other treatment can answer the purpose of establishing a friendly intercourse with them and I trust that this line of proceeding will accord with Your Excellency’s views. It will be our study as well as our earnest desire to assist in carrying into effect any plans which you may purpose towards ameliorating the condition of the Aborigines.¹

¹ Arthur was to grow impatient of such transparent attempts to gain his favour, made by persons wishing to settle on the mainland and claiming that in seeking to acquire land there ‘their object has also been the civilization of the Natives!!—

Arthur's recommendation of the proposal to Hay was hesitant; Mr. Henty and his family, he said, were highly respectable and deserved the support of Government so far as it could consistently be given; but their plan might involve an invasion of the general principle—might be injurious to precedent—might prove embarrassing to the Government. There was, however, nothing half-hearted in his opinion that 'settlement of the Land pointed out by Mr. Henty' was most desirable and should be made in the first place under the aegis of Arthur himself. Snubbed in the matter of Spencer's Gulf, he now made another attempt to have mainland territory put under his charge; Thomas might say that his family neither asked nor needed government protection, but Arthur was only too anxious to offer his own protection, not for Henty, but for any embryo settlement that His Majesty's Government might allow. But where, on this long stretch from the 135th to the 145th parallel, did Arthur think this settlement should be? This important particular he did not divulge. Mr. Henty had not, in fact, pointed out any specific part, and Arthur allowed himself to be equally vague. Indeed, the vagueness, even confusion, of his letter is hard to understand; it did not need more than a glance at the map to tell him that the area referred to by Henty included the whole of the country from west of Spencer's Gulf almost to the eastern edge of Port Phillip Bay, a coast line, counting the two gulfs, of over 1,100 miles; he must have known that there were many different sorts of country within this span, yet he speaks as if there were but one. Some comments in his letter could properly apply only to the coast from Portland Bay eastwards to Port Phillip Bay, while the evidence he quoted from Sturt's narrative, by now obtainable in Launceston, related in fact only to the Murray River Valley and to St. Vincent's Gulf, far away to the west. The inclusion of one place-name would have shown what part of the coast was in Arthur's mind, and might have helped Mr. Hay; it might, equally, have tied the hands of Arthur: not one name did he use. 'The Country', he wrote,

is rich, well watered, and within a very short distance of Launceston

This, of course, is all Stuff, and it is better for all parties to be sincere, and plainly state that the occupation of a good run for Sheep has been the *primary* consideration—if not the only one.' (Arthur to Bourke, 6.10.36, *M.L.*).

—indeed, Mr. Henty's application and his proposal to cede so much Land at Swan River, if allowed to purchase an Estate there, affords strong evidence of the high opinion that has been entertained of it upon inspection.

Its proximity to Launceston and the easy communication across the Straits unquestionably point it out as a Station of importance to this Colony, where the available Territory has already been almost entirely appropriated, leaving but few Spots for the selection of new Immigrants, who might therefore be sent to this Station and be protected by a small Military party detached from Hobart Town.

So far, he indicated the most accessible part of 'the opposite coast', but next he steered farther off to the north-west:

Other arrangements might also be made from hence which would not only save the first Settlers from much of the distress commonly incident to the first occupation of a New Country, which has been so much felt at Swan River, but what is of more moment, might save them from coming into collision with the natives who, from Captain Sturt's narrative, appear to be numerous in that part of New Holland.

My Services are quite at Mr. Secretary Stanley's command if he would wish me personally to superintend for a few weeks the first formation of the Settlement, and would desire a Report upon its adaptation upon which His Majesty's Government may entirely rely. So soon as a sufficient reinforcement of Troops arrives in this Garrison, I could, without apprehension of my absence being injuriously felt, cross the Straits for a short time, and nothing would individually afford me greater gratification than being instrumental in aiding in the occupation of that part of the Coast by means which might tend to secure the protection and promote the civilization of the Aborigines.

When once New Holland is fully stocked with improved Sheep, Great Britain will henceforth be a little less dependent upon the Continent for Wool; and in the promotion of this speculation the Land on the Southern Coast might be sold and the proceeds applied to Emigration. Convicts holding Tickets of Leave who have served with good conduct for a period which renders them eligible for Emancipation might obtain that Indulgence on condition of residing in Southern Australia—a measure which would be advantageous in drafting off part of our Convict population, and thereby making room for the usual succession of transported Felons to be certainly punished and probably reformed in Van Diemen's Land.

As his last paragraph shows, he shared the old anxiety of

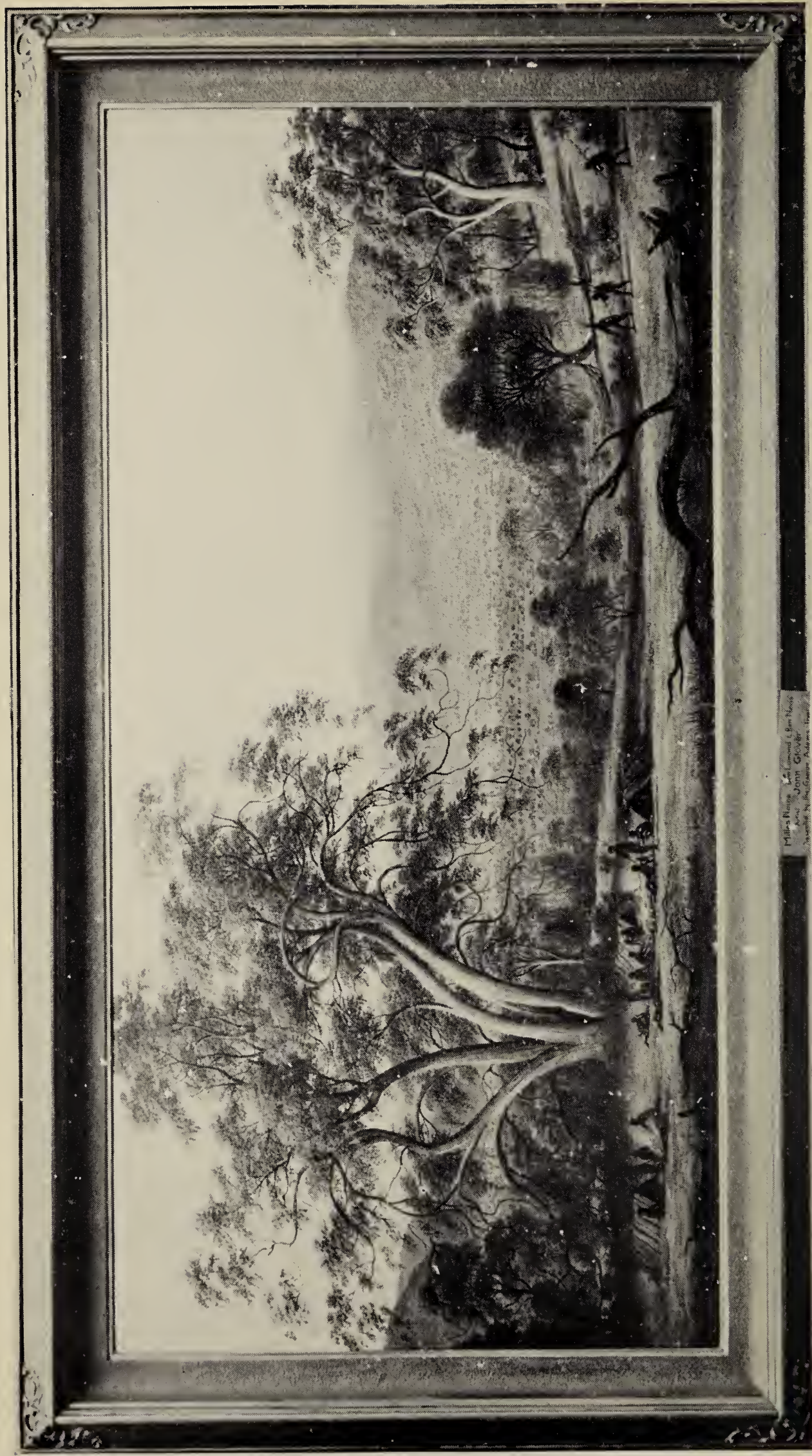


By courtesy of Mrs. H. F. Turner, Hobart

28. VIEW OF LAUNCESTON, 1839

The two-story building directly over the sailing-boat is James Henty's store. Windmill Hill and signal station are above the steeple of the Scots Church below the hill and the tower of St. John's is on the extreme right of the picture. The Eastern Tiers are visible in the distance

Painting by Captain William Lyttleton



Miles River. Ben Lomond & Ben Nevis
and "John Glover"
Painted by the late John Glover

29. BEN LOMOND AND BEN NEVIS, VAN DIEMEN'S LAND

A nearer view of the mountains seen from Strathmore

George III and John Macarthur and, for the matter of that, of Thomas Henty, for the Patriotic Plan to end the importation by England of foreign wool. It shows also that he had read the current reports of the Wakefield colonizers, soon to be active on that southern coast of New Holland on which Arthur would fain have been permitted to establish himself.

By the time that Thomas and Edward anchored off George Town, the memorial and the letters were on their way and James, already fifty-four days at sea, was only a week's sail from Cape Horn.

WITHOUT WAITING

AFTER James left Launceston, Charles took charge of family matters and the business of Henty & Company, John's name appearing with his as a member of the firm. Stephen remained at Fremantle; Francis, more often called Frank and now eighteen, perhaps was at work at Cormiston, at least until his father and Edward returned.

After unloading her profitable cargo of three hundred seal-skins from the neighbourhood of King George's Sound,¹ the *Thistle* was freighted for a trading voyage to New Zealand; instead, she sailed as a rescue ship. News had come from Sydney that the schooner, *John Dunscombe*, of Launceston, had been captured and plundered by the natives at the Bay of Plenty, New Zealand; according to the *Advertiser*, it appeared

the Master was enticed from his anchorage just within the Bay, by the natives assuring him he would find deep water further in; but the vessel having struck on a sandbank, soon after weighing the anchor, and unshipped her rudder, she became unmanageable, and went ashore, when she was taken possession of by the natives, and the Master and crew were marched inland. The *Thistle*, belonging to Messrs. Henty, goes up to New Zealand to endeavour to effect their ransom.

Liddle was authorized by Henty & Co. 'to use every exertion to ransom the whole of the party' and told that the *Thistle's* owners would prefer that the voyage was a dead loss 'provided that so desirable an object as the rescuing of so many unfortunate people from the hands of savages can be effected'. After a very rough passage the *Thistle* returned on 18 August with a characteristic New Zealand cargo of flax, pork, and timber and with her bowsprit and part of her bulwarks gone. Whether or not Liddle had actually contributed to the rescue of Captain M'Lean and his crew, the two vessels had left New Zealand together and parted company only a few days before the *Thistle* came into port. M'Lean, however, found himself unable to follow the *Thistle* and forced to return to New Zealand for

¹ *Laun. Adv.* 1.5.34.

extensive repairs; it was six months before he succeeded in bringing the *John Dunscombe* back to Launceston.¹

From a letter written by Charles Henty to John Street in October 1834, it would seem that at first the intention had been to wait for the official decision on the memorial but that after a while impatience inspired the plan to act at once and hope for the best. Had he been there, James, the cautious, might not have agreed, and even Thomas, the sanguine one, had apparently to be persuaded against his will; but Charles, although like James a business man and a banker, was high-spirited and still well under thirty, and moreover had Edward at his elbow, urgent to get on. By the time the *Thistle* returned from New Zealand the question was settled and the brigantine's next voyage was to prove an historical event.

Although there are no signs of it in the papers of the day, the Hentys' plans aroused a certain amount of gossip and interest, and one citizen was led to protest and to call for government interference. John Helder Wedge, assistant surveyor, had plans of his own; these had been concerted with the well-known settler John Batman of Kingston and discussed with Governor Arthur a year or two before. The unofficial invasion of a valuable part of the territory appeared to Wedge undesirable to a degree; in a letter full of alarm and revealing how little was generally known of the mainland's territorial facts, he wrote to advise Arthur of the gossip of the town:

Campbelltown
18th Sep^r 1834

To His Excellency

Lieutenant Governor Arthur

Sir,

Since I had the honor of a conversation with Your Excellency, of an expedition to examine New Holland, it has become known to me that a party has it in contemplation to take possession of a tract of country at Portland Bay, independent of His Majesty's Government, by virtue of a treaty with the Natives. Considering that it may be of importance to prevent the appropriation of that portion of the Country in New Holland between the Governments of New South Wales and Western Australia, and which is supposed not to come within the jurisdiction of either of them by individuals taking possession of unlimited tracts under the pretence of a treaty with the

¹ *Laun. Adv.* 22 and 29.5.31, 10.9.31; *Liddle Family Papers*, privately owned.

Aborigines, I have deemed it my duty to make this communication, considering it probable that your Excellency may think it expedient to despatch a small party to take possession of the country in the name of His Majesty until the pleasure of the Secretary of State shall have been made known on the subject. . . .

There is but very little doubt from my information that the Southern parts of New Holland afford every advantage and a boundless field for the enterprising Colonist; and that it will at no distant period become a Colony of considerable importance to the Mother Country in a Mercantile point of view; but if the speculation now on foot prevail, large tracts of the most valuable Country will get into the hands of a few individuals, and remain unimproved wastes, occupied by a few herdsmen and shepherds. Thus a death blow to immigration to those parts, which would otherwise afford the necessities and comforts of life to the whole industrious surplus population of Great Britain, will for ever be precluded; for if the Government should now countenance the wholesale self-appropriation of the territory by individuals, they will hereafter, should it be judged expedient to extend the Colonies, be obliged to resort to force to dispossess the occupiers, or grant a high compensation to get rid of them if they be willing to relinquish their possessions.¹

Once more Arthur's thoughts were turned to the acquisition of mainland territory by the government of Van Diemen's Land: he sent Wedge's letter to the Solicitor-General for legal advice. Was it Mr. Alfred Stephen or Arthur himself who marked Wedge's misconception of the New South Wales boundary, drawing a line right round the word 'supposed', and also underlined the warning of troubles awaiting the Government if trespass were allowed? Mr. Stephen's advice shows that he too, learned lawyer though he was, was out-of-date in his knowledge of the boundary question, if not as wide of the mark as Mr. Wedge: despite the fact that the boundary had been moved from the 135th to the 129th degree nine years earlier, on the appointment of Darling as Governor of New South Wales, Stephen said he had 'always understood' that the limits of New South Wales extended, north and south, as far westward as the 135th. Stephen concluded that the geographical limits also constituted

the boundaries of the *Government*, subject to the jurisdiction of

¹ *Melb. Arch.* Wedge (1792-1872), as a member of the Port Phillip Association, was later closely linked with the first settlement of Port Phillip.

Governor Bourke, and his predecessors in office in that Colony. If these assumptions be correct, Portland Bay is within the limits of the Government of New South Wales; and any military party sent there without the authority of the civil power, so possessing that jurisdiction, would be as much trespassers, as the trading parties referred to by Mr. Wedge.

But, said Mr. Stephen,

Even if the facts are not as I have thus supposed them to be, I should still conceive the question not to be materially altered. It is a matter of history, that the English Government has possessed itself of the whole of New Holland. . . . How far this possession may be insisted on, to deprive the aboriginal Inhabitants of the power of selling any part of the Territory, I need not probably now enquire. If any such transaction shall really have taken place, it may be fit to institute a previous inquiry—whether or not it has been, in truth and in fact, a fair and bona fide purchase, or a simulated or cunningly devised continuance, intended only to evade the claims of the British Crown.

But, in any event, said Stephen, the Colonial Secretary would perceive it to be my opinion that His Excellency could not at present interfere. A Governor, in places beyond the limits of his own commission, and having no other authority in that behalf from the King, the source of authority for such purposes, has no other power than that of a private individual.¹

Arthur wrote a marginal instruction to the Colonial Secretary to prepare despatches on the subject to the Secretary of State and to Bourke: these have not been found.

If rumours of Wedge's action reached the Hentys' ears there is no sign of it in the letter written soon after by Charles Henty to John Street. The letter begins with some business, showing that, as well as growing fine wool, Street had ventured into trade. 'My dear Sir', Charles began, Street being twice his age,

I have no doubt you must be much surprised at not receiving Account Sales of your Tobacco long ere this. I regret that it has not been in our power to forward them before, but the fact is, that the tobacco in question is almost unsaleable at any price, being too good for sheep dressing and not good enough for the assigned men or rather people prefer giving their convicts Brazil Tobacco when reasonable which is now the case, in preference to Sydney; the Nett Account has been by this opportunity forwarded to Marsden & Co. on your account.

¹ *Melb. Arch.* Alfred Stephen (1802-94) was later Chief Justice of N.S.W.

I presume you are aware that James and his wife proceeded to England in March last. I am daily in expectation of hearing from them, their stay will be short; with them William will return, so that all the Tarring Hentys will have taken up their Quarters in this part of the world, it is however so long since we saw you, that you can scarcely recollect any of us younger than Jane, Frank the youngest was then just able to run about, he is now something like a young Gum, six feet two or three. It affords us all much pleasure to hear of you, which we are frequently in the habit of doing, by the Sydney people, who are constantly coming to this place: it was my intention to have made a trip to Sydney last year, which James Cox¹ I think communicated to you, and was only prevented, in consequence of The Old Cornwall Bank having got their Books into complete confusion. The Directors engaged me to arrange them—(it being in my way) the result of which, was, that they determined to commence anew with the addition of new shares; this they did, and offered me the situation of Managing Director, worth one way and another about £500 a year, which I, of course, accepted, but without giving up my share in the Firm of Henty & Co. so that as regards the loaves and fishes your humble servant is better off than he could ever have expected on leaving England.

One object James had in view in going to England was to procure land, by purchase on the opposite coast, in which I think he will succeed. I, however, determined not to wait the result of it, but leave with Edward in our little vessel The Thistle to Portland Bay with 25 Heifers and six Bullocks, with a House in frame, stockyard, and four men, and intend following it up by other shipments of Sheep, and Cattle; both Father and Edward have seen a considerable portion of the land in that neighbourhood, and are satisfied with it.

Jane and her husband James [*sic*] Bryan proceed to Sydney in a few days in the Tamar Steamer which Vessel is for sale, and a very fine craft she is, she is the entire property of Bryan,—they will probably see something of you during their visit. We have had a wet Spring, with every prospect of a most abundant crop of everything. I beg my respects to Mrs. Street and believe me,

My dear Sir,

Yours very faithfully,

C. S. HENTY²

John Street Esqr

Bathurst

New South Wales

To the care of Messrs. Marsden & Co.

¹ James Cox of Clarendon, near Launceston, well-known breeder of merinos.

² *M.L.*

While Charles wrote, the *Thistle* was being loaded for Portland Bay. She carried a few stores for whaling parties there; the rest was a first shipment of material and tools for beginning settlement from scratch. The goods listed on the manifest were as follows:

2,500	Bricks
2	Casks Beef
2	„ Pork
4	Bags Flour
2	„ Sugar
1	Chest Tea
3	Kegs Nails
10	Bags Potatoes
2	„ Oats
1	Box Soap
1	Bag Salt
1	„ Peas
1	Keg Spike Nails
1	Bundle Saws
1	Malt Mill
1	Bundle Chains & Tools
3,000	feet of Sawn Timber
	Frame of House
600	feet of Flooring Boards
600	„ of Weather Boards
18,000	Shingles
2,000	Broad Paling
2	Cases of Tools etc.
3	Bundles D ^o
1	Cask of Grape Cuttings
1	Box of Plants
1	Bale of Clothing
1	Cask Earthenware
1	Whale Boat
1	Cask Gun Powder
1	Keg of Tobacco—stores for the Whaling Party at Portland Bay
1	Bag of Wheat
1	Plough 1 pr of Harrows
1	Bullock Dray
6	Working Bullocks
20	Heifers

- 2 Cows
- 2 Bulls
- 5 Pigs

The manifest was endorsed on 11 October by the Collector of Customs, Henry Arthur, one of the Governor's nephews: on the 13th, the schooner sailed.¹

Who sped the *Thistle*, as she set off on this, the third and last Henty migration by sea? It was a departure without the drama of the *Caroline's* for Swan River, or the dignity of the barque *Forth's* for Van Diemen's Land; a small schooner, she carried only essentials, and slipped out of port with as little notice as might be. Thomas, surely, was there to give Edward his blessing; Mrs. Henty could say her silent farewells—she had said so many—from the veranda of Cormiston as the *Thistle* moved down-river in the wide valley below. The *Launceston Advertiser's* ship news reported only that the schooner *Thistle*, Liddle master, had sailed for Portland Bay on Monday, 13 October, passengers Messrs. Henty and 'Campfield' and five indentured servants, with a quantity of building and agricultural implements. There was only one Mr. Henty on board; something, perhaps his new banking responsibilities, had evidently at the last moment prevented Charles from sailing: thus Edward was ever after able to claim the honour of being the brother who had led the way. The names of the indentured men—four, as Charles said, not five—were Thomas Mills, William Gunter, William Macvea, and Thomas Clark.² For company, instead of Charles, Edward had Henry Camfield, once more indecisively on the move; early in the year he and James had passed each other at the Tamar Heads as Camfield came in from Sydney in the schooner *Active* and James in the *Forth* went out.

The south-east corner of the Australian continent suffers as no other part does from frequent and unheralded antarctic storms; therefore the seas of Bass Strait are calm rarely, and never for long. A light wind rises, becomes half a gale, then a gale, and soon great rolling waves fill the channel, two hundred miles wide, between Tasmania and the mainland coasts. It is

¹ *Melb. Arch.*

² These names are recorded in the journal and provide means of settling the many claims to descent from Edward's first companions in his venture to Portland Bay (see *Learmonth*, p. 272).

one of the stretches least liked by even the modern mariner; in the days of sail the passage of the Strait was unpredictable in duration and, near either coast or the island groups, dangerous as well. The direct sailing distance between Launceston and the Bay was less than 400 miles. The wind was fair when the *Thistle* left the Tamar, but it was thirty-four days before she completed her journey and anchored in Portland Bay.

A brief note of their arrival on a fine morning was Edward's first entry in a new journal, a thick oblong book ruled in money columns, bound in sheepskin and with pages marbled in red and blue:

November 19th 1834 Wednesday

Arrived at Portland Bay in the Schooner *Thistle* cast Anchor at 8 a.m. after a long and boisterous Passage of 34 days heavy weather we lost on the Passage 2 Working Bullocks 2 Cows and 2 Calves & 12 Heifers. We landed 13 Heifers 4 Working Bullocks 5 Sows in Pig 2 Turkeys 2 Guinea fowl 6 Dogs Seeds Plants 1 Whaleboat 4 Men H. Camfield & Myself allowance of wages for Man 10/s per week and board fine day with Wind S.E. light Landed all the cattle today by 1 p.m.

In fine weather the cargo was landed and a hut begun; then the wind went round, bringing showers, and Captain Liddle filled up with oil from one of the fisheries, took on wood and water and awaited Edward's instructions to leave: the *Thistle* could not be detained, as the party was in urgent need of the flour she would bring back. On Saturday the 22nd, on the eve of her sailing, Edward wrote to Charles, filling two big double sheets with a description of the voyage and its consequences and of his first doings as a squatter at Portland Bay. He had more material than time; the letter has many corrections and punctuation is often ignored. Either a further sheet is lost or Captain Liddle was obliged to sail before Edward had time to finish the letter and sign his name.

Portland Bay, Nov. 22nd, 1834.

My dear Charles,

We arrived here on the 19th Nov. after a long and bitter passage of 34 days. The second day after we left the Heads we were within 5 miles of Portland Bay; a gale of wind came away from the W.N.W. and blew us back to King Island where we anchored. We lost our best anchor in getting it up, the chain parted; we ran farther along

the Island let go the other. The next day on getting it up we found it broken in two, we *fished it* as you would see. We then let go our small and only anchor, it held on. The next day we got under weigh and got within 20 miles of the Julians, a Gale came away again from the W.N.W. and blew us back to King's Island and this is not the worst, 6 times we were obliged to bear up for the Island and as you may suppose all our provisions for cattle gone. We got plenty of Grass from the Island, it was the same kind as grows in the Marsh opposite the Wharf at Launceston. Our loss has in consequence been considerable, it is as follows—I of Mr. Bryan's working Bullocks, the youngest of the two bought of Cummings, and eleven of Father's heifers. Many times I thought we must lose the whole of them. . . . A stranger to Bass Straits would consider that there was bad management but when I tell you that 21 days after we left the Heads the cattle were *all* alive with the addition of two calves, but owing to the repeated gales of wind we lost both the calves and cows. One was 14 days old and doing well but in a heavy sea the Mother fell on it and killed it. We had all the remainder 18 landed by one o'clock p.m. The day we arrived we took them up to their knees in grass, Trefoil and Vetches, they enjoyed themselves as you may suppose *not a little*. The Bullocks will be of little use to us for at least a fortnight owing to their bruises and low constitution, I hope however to get in what few Potatoes I have left. We shall be very *Short of Flower* before the Thistle returns.

Thomas had not risked sending sheep by the *Thistle's* first trip—they would want more care after landing than anyone in those first few weeks would be free to give; but Edward expected them to follow soon:

As regards sending sheep or cattle the next time, you will of course arrange amongst you (I shall be prepared for either or both) but I should much wish to have four more working bullocks, some of Father's youngest and smallest at Red Hill would do well, and a bull. I hope you will send some Rabbits this time, Potatoes or a few carrots if you have any. The Kangaroos are getting very thin from being hunted so much by Dutton lately . . . the pigs require nothing but what they get from the Land, you can send a few more if you like, they require but little feeding on board as they pick up the corn from the Hay.

Edward had learnt much from the crossing and now gave advice to Charles on a number of things:

First the vessel must have a new Anchor and chain or she will

some day be on the Rocks her cables were strained in heaving up and cannot in consequence be trusted to. Do not lumber the Decks with heavy goods, 6 or 8 Hhds of Water on deck would not hurt and a few light things. In sending the remainder of the timber there will be but little ballast required, all the things we brought on Deck might have gone below had we not had so much ballast in. If you send sheep send a little Hay and remainder Oats and Bran in a bin made up in the Hold—if cattle 1 Ton of Hay could go below and make but little difference in room, also at least six bags of Oats and four or five of Bran, it can go back if not wanted. $\frac{1}{2}$ the quantity of Water would be sufficient below and stowed with the bungs close on the top so as to be easily got when at sea. There is plenty of width for timber to be lashed up along the staunchions but must be stowed regular no ends or sharp edges projecting if any sharp edges a little padding of grass would be of service where the large Bullocks would be, but the small ones would not require it; no cattle to be put on board unless in good condition as in case of bad weather the weak ones would be sure to go off quick . . . one of the Heifers . . . died in consequence of a buck shot wound in its throat which had been gathering for a long time and at last choked it. There is little fear of loosing many cattle or sheep with an average passage. . . . It is quite necessary that Frank or someone should come with the Stock next time as the men generally are sick when most wanted.

The passage had been risky for man as well as beast: Edward was very nearly going overboard in a Gale of Wind. In coming up from the Cattle and going aft I saw George Reeves run up the rigging to get out of the way of a sea that was coming on board and I had just time to get hold of a Rope when the sea broke on board and washed my legs from under me and swung them over the Rail. This was sharp work, we were lying to at the time, Camfield and the Captain were below and escaped it. The boat is a good deal knocked about. I hope the next trip will be more successful, it damped my spirits I can assure you not a little. Camfield was out [i.e. seasick] the greater part of the time when at sea, intends writing the next time.

As to the land, Edward had as yet seen no more of it than before:

it would be a satisfaction to me for [Mr. Bryan] to see the land here before he enters into it largely. I do not know Camfield's opinion any farther than he says he has seen some land on the Banks of the Swan equal to it, he says he has some on his own Grant as good. Father has seen his Land, what does he think? My men are very

much pleased with it and say they have seen nothing equal to it in Van Diemen's Land. Gunter says the Eastern Marshes are more like it than any other part he has seen, Mr. Bryan will be enabled to judge a little from this. I think on further inspection we shall find more timber than we first imagined but the trees are very small and Grass very thick, I shall send up a bunch tomorrow.

Evidently, he did not mean to sleep in a tent a day longer than he must:

The place I have looked out for the House is distant from Dutton's fishery $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of the beach and about 40 acres of clear land in front and good land all round it with a lagoon within 500 yards affording good water throughout the year. It is on a small hill and commands a good view of the Bay.

In 1830 Edward, with Jane, had stayed with Camfield's father and sisters at Burrswood, in Kent: was it because of some sentimental echo from that visit, or due to a suggestion of Camfield's as the two men stood together on the chosen spot, that Edward was to call his later Portland home Burrswood, the name that the house still bears?

As well as working the land, the Hentys intended to enter more fully than before into whaling; in this, as Henty & Co., they had already joined John Sinclair of Launceston, and there now seemed some idea of working with William Dutton at Portland Bay. Dutton had various bits of gossip to give Edward concerning local anchorages and about whales caught and missed; Edward had 'not mentioned sperming to him yet', for, respecting the 'fishing', Edward was awaiting the results of James's visit to England. No doubt the behaviour of visiting whalers and sealers were responsible for the information in Edward's only reference to natives: 'no Natives have been seen for a long time'. It is quite obvious that there was no foundation for Wedge's story of a treaty between intending squatters and the natives of Portland Bay.

With the remarks on whaling the letter¹ ends at the foot of the page. The *Thistle* sailed for Launceston next morning, leaving Edward and his small party to their limitless task.

¹ *Henty Family Papers.*

BEING THE FIRST

THE day the *Thistle* sailed from the Bay was a Sunday. Sunday entries in the daily journal make no mention of cutting logs, sinking casks for water, splitting palings for fences, of digging or ploughing or planting; on that day spade and saw and axe were laid aside. But Edward, too active for idleness, was not rigid in his Sabbath views. On the first Sunday he took a walk through the bush in search of a lost heifer; on another, a boat's journey across the bay with Dutton to fetch seed potatoes for planting on a working day; later, with gun and dog, he went after kangaroo. But from Monday morning to Saturday night work was unceasing on that cliff top above the empty waters of the bay. The bullocks recovered; before they could be used, yokes had to be made; before yokes could be made, or logs felled and barked for a stockyard, or a garden dug for seed, Edward had to prepare the tools. By the end of the first week, all showery weather, Edward and Camfield had dug the garden and sown seeds of turnip, cabbage, Indian corn, peas, radishes, onions, carrots, parsnips, French beans, melons, pumpkins, and lettuce; the men had finished their hut; Edward had made two yokes, handled a rake and other tools, cleaned saws and repaired the boat damaged in crossing the Strait; three hands had been employed cutting logs and the fourth hauling them in with two bullocks: in all they had killed five snakes. And here was Sunday round again, with a change of wind and another fruitless search for the lost heifer, strayed now a whole week.

But this, where they were—the cliff, the creek, the jutting headland and the long sweep of bay—this was merely the edge, the very rim, of the new world that Edward wished to make his own. Only Dutton, the whaler, hunting kangaroo, had seen a little of what lay behind; the settler, Edward, had to push inland, exploring for water, examining the timber, judging the country's quality for carrying sheep. The second week, Edward and a party set out one afternoon on a three-day journey, pull-

ing over in the whale-boat to their starting point, a river mouth some distance along the shore. He wrote two accounts of this, one for Charles, set down each day, and a less conversational record entered in the journal on his return to his tent at the bay. Edward had not his brother James's feeling for exact distance and direction and both records leave out details that would have made their tracks immediately clear; but, read with maps, they show that the region covered was about fifteen miles from south to north and fourteen from east to west, and lay more or less between the rivers and a smaller stream, later called the Surry and Fitzroy Rivers and Darlot's Creek. In both accounts Edward speaks of the later Surry as Dutton's or First River, while he calls the Fitzroy after Clark, the member of his party who first saw it from the top of an inland hill: later in the journal he corrected Clark's to East River, the name by which at its mouth it was presumably already known to whalers. But if Edward's topography was vague his eye was sharp: he missed nothing of the different grasses, the various trees, the sheep hills and the marshes that promised permanent water for stock.

They left their base on Monday, 1 December, in the afternoon:

Light wind from the N.E. very warm, arrived at 6 p.m. made the boat fast in the middle of the river and started for three days walk in the bush accompanied by H. Camfield Wm Dutton 5 men 1 Black Woman and 14 Dogs each a Gun and sufficient quantity of Damper for the Voyage. We walked 2 Miles made Hut got supper and turned in. . . .

The dog Massaroni, who had been lost looking for water at King George's Sound, was not one of the fourteen; 'left Mas at home', says Edward, 'having staked himself the day before'.

Tues. Dec. 2nd

Started at 4 a.m. walked four miles over beautiful sheep hills well sprinkled with wattle and covered with Kangaroo grass trefoil and a silky grass description to me unknown. We stopped by a lagoon at breakfast and started at $\frac{1}{2}$ past seven. We lost some time before breakfast the dogs continually running after Kangaroo and Emu but without success . . . we walked for two hours steering North over beautiful land. We then came to a Stringy Bark forest which took us an hour and $\frac{1}{2}$ to get through it the Land in the Forest indifferent of a Red fullers earth something similar to the Land near Guildford

on the Swan River. After passing the Forest we got into a most splendid country well watered timbered with Whattle, Blackwood and a few small Gums no dead timber scarcely a log in a mile. On descending the Hill we saw a Native he immediately ran on seeing us, he was busily employed pulling the gum from the Whattle Trees.

The journal version adds to this episode:

Saw several native huts . . . but only one Native and he the Men set the Dogs on, these were not my men or they would not have done it.

We walked a Mile and a half and came to a River called by us Clark's River he being the first who saw it. We crossed it and came to a Native fire which had been left but a few minutes before. I found a few Eel baskets which were left on a bush to dry. We stopped half an hour and made the Kettle hot, got tea . . . the Land on the North side of the River is generally Rocky but the Grass & trefoil as thick as can grow and no other timber but Blackwood & Whattle which abounds. This would make a beautiful Sheep Run for every Mile you have a Marsh or two or three acres well covered with grass. . . .

The contrast of this country with not only Swan River but Van Diemen's Land was constantly in his mind; of one stretch on Clark's River he said

J. Cox's at Windburn could not be compared with it (this is the place where I shall some day build my hut) a more lovely spot I never beheld; sheep or cattle sides would soon shake with fat with a taste of the Grass here. Strathmore will not do at all after this, we have the water in its natural state without *making a pond, and swans and ducks without taming*. . . .

plainly a dig at Strathmore's owner, brother-in-law Sam.

We slept last night in some Native huts close to the River, three of our party turned back. We got eels and bream both of which are very plentiful. . . . We started this morning and made the mouth of the East River at 10 a.m. the Land all this way extremely good rather lighter as we approached the Sea but plenty of Grass. There is only two feet Water on the bar at low Water. Lady Julia Percy Island bears S.E. by E. from the mouth. We shot Swans and got Dinner, crossed the River and steered N. for 6 miles . . . we crossed a creek or small River 10 feet deep [Darlot's Creek] which we had not time to explore . . . we crossed Clark's River over a bridge made by the Natives who had evidently just passed before us . . . we passed today at least 50 native Huts but saw only one Native.

The natives may have been there, though, and unseen only because they wished to be, keeping pace with the invaders, using the trees as cover, and moving without sound. One of Edward's party may have seen them, the black woman walking at the heels of her white masters like a fifteenth dog; but she was as alien from the Bay natives as from the whites—not of their tribe, nor their country, not even of their race, for she was a Tasmanian, separated from the mainland blacks by the upheaval of another geological age: if she saw the bush people, she gave no sign.

Thursday December 4th.

Got breakfast and started at 6 a.m. Wind at West beautiful morning. We steered for the big Hill [Mount Clay], 620 feet and made it at 12 a.m. passing over a small quantity of Bad Land but scarcely worth mentioning (Journal note: Lawrence Rock bears from the big Hill $s \frac{1}{4} W$). . . . The Land on the Hill and all around it is of the finest description. I climbed a large Gum tree and got a very extensive view . . . could see nothing but open Hills . . . from this view I can see all the Land I have walked over and from here the country all around has precisely the same appearance inland and along the coast either way. With horses a large quantity of Land could be explored but the season is getting late to explore much on foot as Kangaroo are scarce and you would be obliged to carry all the provisions you would require . . . I am not anxious to explore too much until we hear from home [i.e. England]. . . . We made the boat at 5 p.m. got some Tea and pulled home which we reached at 8 p.m. We had beautiful weather all the time only one shower.

He signed his account for Charles with a jubilant flourish:

Here ends act the first and hope the next may prove as successful.

EDWARD HENTY

His implication that there was to be a second act and his allusion to news 'from home' obviously both refer to the memorial and show anxiety for word from James as to its fate; 'home' to a settler was still the England, Scotland, or Ireland he had left, and it was to remain so for life.¹

¹ His colonial-born children continued to use the word in that sense and even now it occurs in the vocabulary of many Australians who may never have seen 'the Old Country'; it is distinguished by an implied capital H from the home to which they return each night. Due to the until recently continual refreshment of

FOR NEW ZEALAND.
THE BRIGANTINE
"THISTLE,"



JAMES LIDDLE, master, will
sail for the above Port on the
25th inst.

For Freight or Passage apply to the owners,
HENTY & Co.

Cimitiere-street,
May 17, 1834.

FOR SWAN RIVER.
THE CUTTER
"FANNY,"



ARTHUR WHITE, master, will
sail for the above Port on the
25th inst.

For Freight or Passage apply to the owners,
HENTY & Co.

Cimitiere-street,
May 17th, 1834.

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November 19th 1831, Weymouth

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Thurs day 20th
Remained at Landing Cargo and
building etc.
A. W.

1940

[illegible]

202

Sunday 22
 Corresponding books from Mother
 & Father and from 2 Brothers
 then that the light shines

1944

23
 Little failed with him at 10.45
 light showers lost one of the dogs
 out on the bank looking for him
 returned without finding him
 Hunted to 11.45 fresh with showers
 2. Hunted on 11.

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Sixteen days after landing at the Bay the stockyard was finished and Edward yoked his bullocks to the plough; but it was no use, the effects of the voyage had not yet worn off: 'bullocks too weak', he wrote in the journal, 'could not get on, commenced clearing a few small trees away for the plough'. He waited a few days longer, grubbing stumps and burning off a strip along the edge of the bluff, and then tried the bullocks again. This time he had success, and the age-old ceremony of turning the soil with a plough-share took place for the first time in what was to be the State of Victoria. It was a windy morning with a stiff breeze from the south-east and surf breaking on the beach below; for onlookers there was the crew of the whaler *Mountaineer*, on her way to King George's Sound and riding easily in the bay; the back-drop was the virgin bush, and the lightning appropriate to drama played all round. It was not the season for sowing wheat; some of the lands—eight yards wide and a hundred long—were planted with potatoes, and after these were harrowed four sorts of turnips were sown over the top; some were planted with Indian corn, ploughed in, and some were sown with peas. The *Mountaineer* sailed and the brig *Camilla* came in to load with oil from the fishery of John Sinclair; ploughing continued, and the day the peas were sown the *Thistle* returned, bringing Frank and some important additional stock.

Friday 19th Dec.

Ploughing and sowing peas. Arrived the schooner *Thistle* from Launceston, left Launceston with 5 steers 1 Cow 1 Bull and three Heifers 4 Thoroughbred Merino Rams three Weathers 6 Thoroughbred Ewes 71 Crossbred Ewes Passenger Mr. F. Henty Landed also 4 Rabbits 2 Fowls Plants etc. as per day Book. Wind S.E. fine.

This entry is historically important in that it proves what appears to be little known—that the Hentys were the first to bring merinos into the future State of Victoria, either from the Sydney side or from across Bass Strait. This fact cannot have been known, for instance, to those who erected a memorial beside the grave of Mrs. John Forlonge at Seven Creeks, Euroa,

the Australian population by arrivals from Britain, the habit cannot survive the post-war flow of European migrants: 'Home' to the nostalgic emigrant to Australia no longer means exclusively the British Isles but may mean any one of a number of countries on the Continent, civilized or primitive, all torn by politics or war.

stating that, with her mother, Mrs. Janet Templeton, she imported the first fine wool sheep to Victoria in 1835—a year that itself could be challenged, Hentys quite apart.¹

With the rest of the sheep and cattle, the merinos brought by the *Thistle* were put in charge of Thomas Mills.

Saturday 20th

Landing cargo from the Thistle Men employed ploughing and sowing Peas chipping them in after dinner Wind S.E. fine day fresh breeze.

Monday 22nd

Splitting post and Rails for Sheep Yard Bullocks drawing up paling from the beach Wind WSW Thistle taking in Ballast stove their Whale boat on a rock.

Thursday 25th

Christmas Day a Holiday Wind SW.

Were the precious turkeys, or the guinea-fowl, sacrificed to provide the traditional roast bird? A plum pudding was surely brought by the *Thistle*, together with a hamper from Mrs. Henty with some of her butter and cheese, pickles and jams to help the boys and Camfield celebrate their first Christmas on the mainland.

Two days later the brigantine sailed for 'a seal rock to the Westward', south of Kangaroo Island, leaving her whaleboat for repair. Just before the end of the year the lost heifer came back.

The year 1835 opened with many fires in the bush, fanned by a hot north wind; the first planted potatoes began to show, and the *Thistle* returned from the westward, apparently without results worthy of noting in the journal.

Monday 5th January.

Hands chipping in Potatoes fenced around the well put casks on skid for getting Water. Sailed the schooner Thistle for Launceston, passenger H. Camfield and 1 Black Woman belonging to Wm. Dutton to be landed at King's Island. Wind S.W. fresh breeze plenty of schnapper caught.

¹ The Hentys were also the first to import rabbits, but as they failed to establish them the responsibility for the State's worst pest must be credited to the successful efforts of other much later pioneers.

Natives now ventured for the first time to approach the Hentys' huts and yards:

Saturday 24th January

Strong Wind from SE.

1 Man unwell from cut on leg from adze 1 out after cattle 1 tending sheep

30 [? 50] Natives seen today their appearance was friendly but one of the dogs chased them and caught one by the buttock which drove the others away. The dog returned covered with blood. During the night Gale from the east expecting the Thistle from Launceston.

The next week brought a pleasant social event:

Monday 26th

Arrived the Rebecca cutter Captⁿ C. Friend from Launceston Passenger Mrs. Friend bound to Northumberland Bay for the purpose of surveying it with the intention of forming a whaling establishment there should it be found secure anchorage.

Next day,

Captⁿ and Mrs. Friend came on shore dined and spent the day with us.

The cutter *Rebecca* is not to be confused with the schooner of the same name, soon to play an important part in Port Phillip's settlement story. The cutter's owner was Captain Charles Friend, late of the merchant navy and now Customs House Officer at George Town and nephew of the better known Lieut. Matthew Curling Friend, formerly master of the *Wanstead* and now Port Officer at Launceston. Though apparently not the first white woman to visit the bay,¹ Mrs. Friend may have been the first actually to land there and was certainly the first entertained by Edward and Frank. For Edward, the day must have been largely spoilt by the onset of a severe toothache that troubled him each time the Friends dined on shore. Toothache does not cure itself: which of Edward's men—carpenter, cooper, splitter, ditcher, shepherd—pulled the offending tooth? It is one of the journal's unfinished tales.

The most important happening of this time of first things was

¹ The *Laun. Adv.* of 6.8.33 gives the names of Mr. A. Harrison and daughter as passengers in the *Thistle* on her return voyage from Fremantle, but they cannot be traced in either Perth or Launceston records.

the building of the house. Begun in February, in two months, thanks largely to Edward's own abilities, the brothers were able to leave the tent for a shingled roof. In primitive communities the carpenter and the smith are reckoned the most valuable men: Edward at twenty-five was both, and a good husbandman as well. Hut and house, yard and fence and forge, whaleboat, wheel and plough—all these things he could make and mend. Of middling height and sturdy frame, his spirits were high and his grasp of a man's hand almost crushing in its strength. Not a student, and interested chiefly in outward and material things, admittedly aiming at wealth and ease but taking the laborious way to both and enjoying it, he was of the stuff that makes the most effective first colonist in a new land.

Thursday, 19th February.

Commenced foundations of House Sunk Round logs 2 feet in Ground with Bark on secured plates with spikes Strong wind from East.

The foundations took three days; then, young Frank working with him, Edward raised the frame he had brought in the *Thistle* and the foundations were filled. Three of the hands helped, using bullocks to haul water, limestone, timber, and bricks to the spot, the two men most often named in the journal being Gunter and MacVea. The flooring boards were brought from the beach to the water hole to soak out sand and warping; in a gale of wind a lime kiln was built and mortar made. While Edward built the brick chimney—a week's work—Frank battened the house, made a trying plane for the mouldings and mended the ladder; a faint pencil marginal comment by Edward, marking milestones of the journal in his later years, reveals that the chimney smoked all night. Together they put up a forge, where the cooper, Sinclair, assisted by Frank, made punches and compasses for workshop use. Meantime, others dug and banked ditches and split stringy bark corner posts and rails for the garden fence. Then began the weatherboarding of walls and shingling of roof; the doors and windows were made and fitted to house and skilling, and the windows glazed; finally the floors were laid.

Thursday 23rd (April)

2 Men fencing as yesterday got into House this evening Wind W.N.W.

—a brief entry that covered much. Next day, a long dry spell broke with heavy squalls of rain: at night, even if the chimney did smoke, how pleasing to the two brothers to sit snug within the house of their own creation while the winds blew, baffled, without.

Edward did not always find it easy to manage the community of whalers and indentured men, nor was Sunday always a day of peace.

Sunday 22 (March)

Out fishing for snappers no success Cooper up after dinner opened out some of our Hogsheads, at 5 p.m. Duttons Pigs got into the Garden and rooted up all the Potatoes with some Turnips Frank and self drove them off I shot twice at them with Small shot at about 40 yards Frank shot once at about 50 and we thrashed two or three of them with sticks and with great difficulty got them off. Hubbard [a whaling employee] very insolent respecting a pig of his threatening if I shot this he would shoot my dogs I retaliated by threatening to shoot him if he did we were both in a Passion but at last got cool and parted good friends he wishing he had not bought the Pig I told him my opinion respecting his repairing the boats telling him he had not done them in a Workmanlike manner and that they would not last the Season as they were.

At a later date, when James came to Portland Bay to view the settlement for himself and made notes of matters to be attended to, he recorded that

The man Hubbard is a perfect nuisance to the Company and must be got away. He lives upon us at an enormous expence, does scarcely any work and induces the other men here also to be idle, the boats are in miserable order . . .¹

The next Sunday after the scene with Hubbard, Edward's journal tells of trouble with other whaling hands:

Thos Clark—Brown—Jones and Page left the Fishery without permission on the 27th instant at day-break with a fortnight's supply of Provisions for the supposed Purpose of getting Native women the Huts were left open in consequence of Brown's absence who was left in charge.

¹ Hubbard's wife, who arrived with their daughter 13.12.35, should perhaps be put on record as the first white woman resident of Portland Bay. But James's comments on her husband suggest that she was probably not a resident for long.

The journal records without comment the men's return in less than a week. Another episode concerns the cook, described earlier in the month as 'very impertinent today':

Monday 30th

. . . remainder of day fishing caught 12 schnappers and 100 flat Heads returned about dark ordered the Cook to dress some for Supper refused doing it and was very impertinent declining to do any more cooking this is the second time he has done it.

From time to time Edward's men and bullocks had been busy with work for 'the Whaling establishment', part of the business of the Henty Company but not a venture of Edward's own, and limited so far to 'tonguing'.¹ With autumn, the whaling season was about to begin. When the *Thistle* came back from Kangaroo Island in March, as well as salt she brought a headsman, E. Tomlins, and a puller, Thomas Clark; Tomlins got the first whale of the season:

Wednesday 8th (April)

. . . at 4 p.m. a Whale came in to the bay close to the Fishery and grounded but got off 2 boats were manned and E. Tomlins got fast and killed her in 20 minutes towed her home N.B. gave the Men a Gallon of Rum.

Trouble ensued: next day

at 8 a.m. Mr. Tomlins came up and reported to me that the Men would not cut the Whale in unless they got Meat. I arranged with him that if they did not I would assist him with the Bullocks and my men, offering them a bonus of £ each to assist for the purpose of encouraging them and also to show the other Men that it could be done without them, but on seeing my determination and the Bullocks and Men following they immediately turned to and cut in—many of them had refused to do it amongst them C. Mills, E. Fox, Rd. Cokely and not without considerable abuse and at the same time daring me to touch the whale.

On 21 April the brig *Amity*, Captain Nichols, arrived from Hobart Town with boats and men and gear for Kelly and Hewitt;

¹ Tonguing: an obsolete word in use in the whaling literature of the 1830s but rarely explained. Tonguers were those who contracted to tow the whale carcasses ashore and to cut them up and who received in payment the oil from the dissected carcass, including the tongue and interior parts (S. J. Baker, *New Zealand Slang*, in *A Dictionary of Coloquialisms*, 1940; R. McNab, *Old Whaling Days*, 1913; E. J. Wakefield, *Adventure in New Zealand*, 1839-44, pub. 1845).

the *Thistle*, this time under Captain Dempster, followed with a rival whaling party from Launceston. Whaling now dominates the journal: work ashore goes on—logs are hauled, grass cut for stockyards, posts morticed for the lambing paddock, a veranda to the house begun—but it is all a little flat; the centre of interest is no longer on the bluff or in the bush but has moved to the sea. The bay is now a flurry of pursuit and capture. Almost daily, Sunday or not, in rain and hail and wintry wind, whales are killed by Dutton and Tomlins and Chase, by the two Mansfields, by Parish and Pillar; by Dutton, Sinclair's headsman, more often than all. Rivals, Chase and Tomlins fasten their irons into the same 'fish'; in the dark, Tomlins the conqueror, towing in his prize, is run into by Chase and his boat smashed. *Thistle's* Captain Dempster, capsized in the jolly-boat, is pulled from the water by Pillar; Pillar in his turn is picked up by one of the Mansfields, at the time fast to a whale; Dutton is capsized in fastening, Chase picks him up and Tomlins gets Dutton's whale. Boats are stove, whales spout blood and run out to sea with the line; darkness falls, and to avoid disaster rival headsmen must cut their lines, fast to the same fish, and return to the shore, comrades in defeat.

The *Thistle* helped to tow the dead whales to the beach for cutting in; a huge pot was set up for trying out the company's blubber, while Edward at the forge made hoops for coopering the casks. The schooner *Elizabeth*, Captain Acres, was the first vessel to arrive for the spoils; in June she brought 50 tons of casks and left again for Launceston with 99 tons of oil; Frank went too, planning to be absent from the Bay for two or three weeks.

And so it went on, with whales seen and caught almost every day throughout the season—one, two, three, four or more; as many as thirty were seen by the *Elizabeth*, working her way into the bay again. Barques and brigs and schooners arrived with casks, left with oil and returned for more; one brig, the *Lavinia*, left the Bay for London with 180 tons of oil and 525 bundles of whalebone. The *Lavinia* was to have brought Frank back from Launceston but, says Edward, he 'lost his passage from being too late down the River'.

Whaling is seasonal and fevered; quiet Earth is constant in her claims, and in her gifts: but she gives only to those who

work faithfully all the year round. Edward was not to enter personally into whaling for two years; within sight of the chase he went steadily on with the work of creating a homestead and a farm, caring for the progeny of the red Cormiston cattle and for the sixty-one lambs from his first lambing, sowing vegetables of all sorts for the second time, planting the apple trees and raspberry canes, strawberries and gooseberries and vines sent by his father from Fawkner's nursery on Windmill Hill. In the spring, notes of lamb-marking, sheep-washing and shearing—the first shearing in Victoria—took the place of the journal's decreasing references to vessels and whales. And long before the end of the whaling season Edward had cleared and ploughed for his first wheat, making those straight lines of ridge and furrow that are clearly visible under the green turf on the bluff-top to this day.¹

¹ They are close to the obelisk erected to the memory of the pioneer Hentys and the explorer Sir Thomas Mitchell; running slantwise from the cliff-top, they are perfect aids to the erosion visible along the edge. A farmer explains for the benefit of the incredulous that ploughs of the period threw the lands much higher than those of modern implements; the traces of these would long ago have been obliterated, even though protected as the Portland relics are by a close carpet of long-undisturbed grass. A photograph of the plough said to have been used on this occasion is in *Learmonth* opposite p. 198. Stories that Edward made it himself can be disbelieved: he brought his plough and harrows in the *Thistle*, as the manifest shows.

LONDON CAMPAIGN

THE *Forth* with James and his wife and son arrived at Dover on 24 July 1834, after only four months at sea; she carried also the Henty Company's cargo of wool, bark, hides, and sealskins, with a small quantity of cedar and copper, to the total value of £1930. 10s. 3d. According to James's journal, the *Forth* was a hungry and ill-equipped ship with a parsimonious and obstinate master. Thomas's journal had registered no complaint against the same Captain Robertson during the voyage in 1831-2, but the *Forth* was on that occasion a chartered ship and food arrangements were therefore not the responsibility of the captain. Now, after only a few weeks at sea, while approaching the Horn in the icy squalls of latitude 58 South they ran out of tea and bread; thereafter the cabin passengers had to do with hard biscuit, like the crew. Some weeks later in the South Atlantic the *Forth* was spoken by the barque *Georgiana* and asked if she had any wants; None, replied Captain Robertson: We want everything, sang out a passenger; but Captain Robertson took no notice and the *Georgiana* passed on. With a month's sailing still to come, James records that Mrs. Henty was 'suffering much from a positive want of nourishment'; some days later

Our Dinner today is usual Tripe and Carrot Broth. Mem^o. Scotch ships are always to be avoided when wanting a Passage. There is neither comfort attention or delicacy aboard them.

July 6th. Killed a Goose the last head of Poultry in the Ship. The short supply of coffee which has been hitherto served out was this day exhausted leaving us to our own resources.

James tried roasting wheat as a substitute, with unpalatable results.

July 8th. List of necessities not now supplied the Cuddy Passengers viz.

Tea	Pepper	Pork is all expended one cask of
Coffee	Potatoes	salt beef left.

Sherry Wine	Sweet Preserves	The Brandy having been put into a Vinegar Cask is not drinkable except by hard drinkers. There is neither spare rope nor canvass in the ship.
Port Wine	Pie dishes	
Cabin biscuit	Salt fish	
Gin	Oatmeal	
Poultry		

James had reason for anxiety, for Charlotte was expecting her second baby; her later ill-health was always attributed by her family to this long period of discomfort and inadequate food. On 10 July they were clear of the Azores and steering for the Channel; they made the Lizard on the 20th. On that day they 'broached the last Cask of Beef, Killed the last Pig and wore out the last broom'. Later, owing to all the short-comings, James succeeded in obtaining a refund from Captain Robertson of £20.

July 21. Pleasant breeze up Channel off St. Albans Head at 6 o'clock a.m. Boarded by Cowes Pilot Boat No. 3 supplied with Potatoes and a Newspaper of July 4th reports the dissolution of Earl Grey's administration and the formation of a New Cabinet. . . . Gave the Pilot Two Apples brought from V. D. Land. Sent the Mail on Shore by him and wrote three letters one to Buckle & Co requesting them should they have received no previous advices from us to insure only from this place (off the Isle of Wight) to London, one to W. Henty and one to Miss Carter [Charlotte's sister].

July 22nd. Becalmed off Beachy Head Light airs from the Eastward Upwards of Thirty Sail of Vessels up and down Channel principally Foreigners from the Baltic. Boarded by a French fishing boat without Fish and a Dover Lugger. . . . Passed Eastbourne and Hastings both visible from the Ship. The dissolution of Lord Grey's administration confirmed by the Dover Boat. Capt. Robertson's Swan died.

On the 23rd they arrived at Dover and James left the ship, Mrs. Henty and Henry remaining on board until the *Forth* docked in the Thames. It was five years since James had been on English soil and his first impression was something of a shock. Dover 'appears truly Frenchified from the dress manners and customs of the French being so much adopted. Proceeded to London for Mail at which place I arrived on the 24th July 1834'.

Before sailing, James had registered a resolve to keep a daily journal while in England. For this he did not go to the expense of a new book; he continued to use the little leather-bound volume that he had carried across the Darling Range in 1830. On its small pages, only six inches by four, heterogeneous pencil

notes can still be deciphered—signposts of the progress of James's colonial career to date. At one end is his record of that exploring journey from the Swan, with sketches of the Avon River Valley and the prominent hill he had named after Mr. Sam Bryan, then no more than a knowledgeable Van Diemen's Land farmer and a new friend; these are followed by his drawings of the coast near King George's Sound as he saw it early in 1832. At the other end are notes of goods supplied in 1831 to various residents of the Swan—shirts and a pencil-case for Lieut. Preston, a cross-cut saw for the Rev. Mr. Wittenoom, nails for Mr. Richard Wells. Then the notes jump to Launceston in 1833 and a different set of names; there are lists of the cargoes shipped to Fremantle in the *Thistle* and in the *Fanny* to Circular Head; in March of that year figures for timber needed for the roof of his store and the house, almost certainly Grant Staples in Cimitière Street; in May an entry, 'Quitted S. Lord's house in Cameron Street' followed by a note of rent paid to Mr. Lord for the last time. There are lists of the most desirable goods to import from England, from marble chimney-pieces, cushioned arm-chairs, and pianofortes, both cheap and good, to 'Quart and Pint Imperial Pewter Pots for Publicans'. Whaling interests begin to appear, with information gleaned from John Sinclair about wages, provisions, and equipment for his stations at Twofold Bay and Portland Bay; there is another list of gear compiled for Edward after he had visited Spencer's Gulf and was prospecting at the Bay. Then, with gathering momentum, notes for James's now approaching English visit, with a list of the influential personages he must wait upon in connexion with the memorial, headed by the Duke of Richmond, Lord Egremont, and Lord Chichester and including various members of Parliament and Archdeacon Scott. On another page are names and addresses of business houses—Sir John Lubbock's, Buckles', Borrodaile's, Samuel Montefiore, the Van Diemen's Land Company and Lloyd's. Then back from persons to goods, another list for the family firm—Red Herrings in Barrels, Ladies' Riding Hats, Gentlemen's Shooting Coats, Worsteds and Floss Silks for 'working'; an order of perfumery for one Wm. Brigg—lavender-scented amber, bear's grease, Macassar oil, essence of bergamot, jars of French scent, 'Pomade divine', fashionable back combs, quires of Billet Doux paper

and Billet Doux sealing wax to match. In a memorandum of recommendations he was asked to put before the London directors of the Van Diemen's Land Company was a suggestion that the company should try to get part of their grant exchanged for 'a portion of land on the opposite coast, most of which is calculated for Sheep'. Among the last notes made before the book was packed away for the voyage is the London address of their family friend Dr. Jeremiah Cloves.

Charles had told John Street that James's stay in England would be short, but nearly eleven months were to pass before he embarked again. Mrs. Henty probably spent the time with her family at Worthing; James, except for a period of serious illness, dashed about between London and Sussex and Kent with the exhilaration of the wanderer returned. On that first exciting day ashore he made meticulous note of costs—£1. 2s. 6d. for boat-hire, 13s. for a brief halt at the King's Head, 5s. for fruit and cigars, 21s. for his fare to London on the night coach. He arrived at six next morning at the 'Spread Eagle', Grantchester Street. His first act was to buy a new hat before calling on his agent, Buckle's, and meeting a number of men on his list; and as the *Vibelia*, the *Surry* and the *Drummore* had arrived from Australia, he met also 'a great many persons who know me, on 'change'. He found everyone 'very civil' and anxious to do business. An urgent matter to arrange with Buckle's was the insurance on the *Thistle* and the *Fanny*; both vessels were at sea when James sailed and for all he knew were at sea still.

That first evening, visiting Cross, the publisher, at 18 Holborn, James was 'gratified exceedingly by the sight of a letter from Father to Cross announcing his and Stephen's safe arrival at the Swan'—news that necessitated a change in the insurance on the *Thistle* just arranged. The schooner and the sealskins that Thomas was expecting to pick up off King George's Sound were insured by James for the return journey to Launceston, certain adjustments to be made 'should she return to Port Dalrymple before the 1st May last'—a mixture of tenses that was perfectly normal at that time, since no insurance arrangements could then be made at the Australian end.

Next day James was in the thick of business, either with merchants and shippers in the city or at St. Katharine's Dock where the *Nimrod* was loading for Launceston and would carry

a letter to Charles, and where the *Forth*, with the exhausted Charlotte and little Henry, their baggage, and the Henty cargo, was expected from the Downs. In the city he had a pleasant encounter: 'Accidentally saw R. Morrah in Cornhill with whom I went to Wandsworth and spent a delightful afternoon surrounded by his wife and children.' Since Mrs. Morrah and Mrs. Henty were sisters, Charlotte must have been glad indeed to hear that the old *Caroline* breach was healed. Next day, 26 July,

Ship came up to the Docks landed Mrs. H. and Henry and took them by Hackney Coach to Grove Cottage to her sister. . . . Met William at the 'Spread Eagle' looking ill. Found that he had sent out a letter of credit for £700 on Lubbocks and goods for £300 together £1000 to the credit of J. G. Cloves at interest.

William now practised at Brighton; expected by his father to marry one of John Street's many half-sisters, he had become engaged to Henry Camfield's sister Matilda Susannah instead. James, seeing his brother off to Brighton, promised to go down for the wedding in three weeks' time.

At last Charlotte was to have the happiness of seeing her old home again. James engaged seats in Wednesday's coach to Worthing—one inside and one outside; so Henry travelled for nothing on the parental knee. On 30 July they 'arrived all safe and found our friends well. Coach hire and expenses 40/-'. At Worthing they lived at 11 Warwick Place. James went about the little town visiting friends—Mrs. Bowen, Mrs. Tribe, 'Bessie Morrah', and others—and was welcomed by the Newlands of Broadwater and by the Revd. P. Wood, of Charlotte's parish church. There is no mention of Tarring in the journal; the old village, as the Hentys had known it not so long ago, had been swallowed by destitution. After two days James took the coach for Brighton (2s. 6d.) and 'called on the Camfields with William saw Matilda, Eliza and the old Gentleman slept at William's'.

Thanks to the chance passing of the *Forth* and the schooner *Active* at the Tamar Heads, James was able to give Henry Camfield's family the first news of his safe arrival in Launceston from New South Wales, while Eliza's 'heart's wish' for her brother, still unsatisfied, is certain to have prompted her to ask James if there were any matrimonial hopes. There was now no reason for the restless Henry to return to England; the farm and house and tanning business had been sold to a Mr. Salomons for

£12,500; the family had moved to Brighton and Burrswood was a chapter that was closed. Sister Maria had married her Sydney barrister, Richard Windeyer, and would be going to live in New South Wales; William Henty had planned to sail with Matilda to Van Diemen's Land with James when the time came; then only Eliza and her father would be left. Was it Eliza or old Mr. Camfield or Matilda herself who persuaded William to change his plans? Only a few days later, evidently hesitating to take the plunge, he wrote to James 'announcing his intention to remain at Brighton for another year'; James recorded it without comment but when Thomas heard of it he said William would be a blockhead not to come.

William's wedding took place on Monday, 18 August. James went over from Worthing the day before, and the brothers and the Camfields all went together in the evening to 'the new church'. Next day, James

Assisted at 10 o'clock at St. Nicholas Church Brighton with Miss E. and Mr. W. Camfield in the ceremony of the marriage of my brother William and Miss Matilda Susanna Camfield returned to 17 Grand Parade to Lunch. Afterwards went to the Cricket Ground to witness a match between Sussex and all England¹—dined at 17 Grand Parade and returned to Worthing in the Evening.

On this eventful day his expenses were 5s. 6d.

Before James had left Sussex in 1829, he was a young provincial banker and merchant in a small way; he returned to England a man of wide experience and, in the view of Londoners looking for business, with the attraction of coming from the expanding colonies where interest on investments was high. People talking with him could not fail to be impressed with his intelligence, honesty, and drive; it is not surprising that in the city he was met with 'gratifying civility' and with proposals for co-operating in trade. He must have felt his journey to England justified on this score alone; but, besides his personal business, there were matters in which he was able to forward the affairs of other colonists, especially his fellow colonists of Cornwall, Van Diemen's Land's northern and neglected half. The Board of Directors of the Van Diemen's Land Company met him by

¹ A two-day match, 18 and 19 Aug., won by England by 57 runs (*Lilywhite*, vol. ii, 1827-40). As James left Brighton for Worthing on the 18th he did not have to watch his county lose.

appointment and listened 'most attentively' to all he had to say; he recommended a trial of South Down sheep, 'a reduction of mouths at the different establishments particularly Indented Servants', and described his plan for modifying the land regulations with regard to new settlers. John Marshall, agent to the Emigration Committee, urged James to 'speak to Mr. Hay Under-Secretary for the Colonies on the subject of having a Cargo of Free Females sent to Launceston'. This, James must have been more than willing to do; Launceston felt it bitterly that the shipments of 'free females' sent out since free emigration had begun in 1831 had been sent only to Hobart Town, where a ladies' committee winnowed the women, placing the best in domestic situations in the south and sending the unwanted few to the north. In London, thanks to James, justice was done and Launceston got its cargo; but at first insult replaced injury at the Van Diemen's Land end. According to the *Cornwall Chronicle* (29.8.35), most objectionable arrangements had been made for the distribution of the two hundred very superior females chosen for the first shipment to Launceston direct: applications for their services had to be sent to the Launceston Commandant—(a bachelor)—to be

submitted to the Ladies Committee at *Hobart Town*, and after all the best of them have been picked, the Cornwallites have been graciously permitted to pay an exorbitant charge for the travelling expenses of the refuse. . . it is well known that our respected Townsman, Mr. James Henty, has exerted himself in England, not only to secure to this Port the advantage of an arrival direct, but has bestowed great pains in assisting the Committee, to select Emigrants calculated to benefit both the Colony and themselves. To deprive us then of the results of his friendly interference, we think is the height of injustice. Are there not materials amongst us to form a Ladies Committee on the Spot? Are there no mothers of families, to whom the charge of distributing, and providing eligible situations for these females, can be safely entrusted?

This, said the *Chronicle*, was another instance of the disregard by the grandees of the metropolis of the interests of the north:

We demand of the Head of the Government to redeem his pledge to us, on this, as on many other points and to shew that the improvement of *every* part of the Colony, and the welfare of *every* portion of its Inhabitants are objects of his constant solicitude.

In August, immediately after James's arrival in London, the subject of female emigration to Australia had been attacked by a correspondent of *The Times*; James wrote to *The Times*, stating the facts as they applied to Van Diemen's Land, a letter referred to but not printed as *The Times* considered the attack was directed only at New South Wales: his letter was however included in a pamphlet by Marshall called *A Reply to Misrepresentations which have been put forth respecting Female Emigration to Australia*; in it, James asserted that the great want of the colony was a large supply of industrious and virtuous females, applauded the past record of the philanthropic ladies charged with their care, and deplored the mischief likely to affect the colony by such articles as had appeared in *The Times*. 'We are glad', said the *Launceston Advertiser* six months later, 'that Mr. Henty has not lost sight of the interests of the Colony, though in London' (12.2.35).

James's business prospects in England and his already established trade justified him in acquiring more vessels for the Hentys' own use. Ships were being built in Van Diemen's Land, and of local timbers, but as he was in England it was more practical for James to build or buy here, where there was a wider choice:

August 20th. Went to Shoreham and had a long conversation with Balling the ship builder, he is now about to launch his Fifth vessel this year he does not approve of Blue Gum it splits and vents so much although excellent for trenails. . . . Ships are now built only of such timber as Lloyds specify who reject Blue Gum. Informed by Balling that a Vessel of 220 Tons called the *Mary Ann* lying in St. Katherine's Docks is now to be bought for £800. Determined to go up to see her, Balling writing to the owners to that effect. Vessel has a Poop and to him appeared a cheap Vessel.

But by the time James reached London and the Dock the *Mary Ann* had sailed for Liverpool and he had to look for something else. Shortly after, he bought not one vessel but two.

Manifest of cargo on board the Brigantine Thistle
James D. Liddell, Master for Port Louis Bay

2500 Bushels

2 Casks Beef

2 - - Pork

4 Bags Flour

2 - - Sugar

1 Chest Tea

3 Kegs Nails

10 Bags Potatoes

2 - - Onions

1 Box Soap

1 Bag Salt

1 - - Tea

1 Keg Spike Nails

1 Bundle Tars

1 Millstone

1 Bundle Chairs & Tools

300 feet of Saw Timber

Frame of House

600 feet of Flooring Boards

600 - - of Matching Boards

18,000 Shingles

2000 Boards & Paling

2 Casks Soda &c

3 Bundles G.

1 Cask of Grape Cuttings

1 Box of Plants

1 Bale of Clothing

1 Cask Gunpowder

1 Whale Boat

1 Cask Gunpowder

1 Keg of Tobacco - stores for the Whaling Party

1 Bag of Wheat

1 Flour &c 1 p. of Flour

1 Bullock Wagon

Shipped by

Henry & Co

James D. Liddell

By courtesy of the Trustees, Public Library of Victoria

M 5081

Brought Over

162 1/4
3

6 Working Bullocks
20 Hides
2 Cows
2 Bulls
5 Pigs

Kent

2 Basket of Tobacco - New York
1 Cask of Beef
2 Bags of Flour } P. M. Smith
Stores for the Whaling Party at Port Louis Bay

162 1/4
3

Launceston
Oct 10th 1834

J. F. Liddell

Produced before me at the Custom House
Launceston 11th Oct^r 1834

Henry Liddell

(Collector)

32 1/2

INTEREST IS THE THING

IN business matters James apparently achieved all he wanted; how was it with that other important mission, the memorial and the purchase of land on the opposite coast? In this he found the way was not so clear. In trade he was his own prime mover, but to move the Government, almost instinctively resistant, he had to depend on the influence of other men: the eighteenth century was gone, but not the age of patronage. At that time the James Hentys of England invariably used subservient language when addressing a man of rank and felt no hurt to their pride in doing so. Hopeful of favours, they presented boxes of finan haddocks from Aberdeen or of seeds and shells and bird skins from the Antipodes, not only to the highest but to those of the same world or who trod on its fringes and might have an opportunity to put in the effective word. Months earlier in Van Diemen's Land, James had seen to the dispatch of such tribute to Lord Chichester, to his father's old friend Colonel T. Humphry, and to Sir Culling Smith, M.P., of Bedwell Park, Potter's Bar; after landing he sent Mr. B. Free-land of Chichester, Colonel Humphry's son-in-law, some of the cedar brought home in the *Forth*: three weeks later he began his campaign. By now he had left the Spread Eagle Inn and had taken lodgings at 51 Dorset Street, Salisbury Square; was it more economical or a better address? On an August Saturday, taking William from preoccupation with his wedding only two days off, he

Paid Earl Chichester a visit at Stanmore Park by invitation of his Lordship found him most polite and attentive particularly desirous of information as regards the Colonies generally and also in respect to the South Australian Company.¹ Stated to him my opinion relating to the operation of the present Land Regulations in V.D. Land to which he appeared to assent. After partaking of Lunch Grapes etc. we took leave his Lordship requesting me to repeat my visit whenever convenient to me. Returned to Brighton with William and dined with the Camfields took coach for Worthing.

¹ The body responsible for financing the new settlement.

Not long before leaving Launceston, James had opened a note from the Duke of Richmond addressed to Thomas and enclosing Mr. Stanley's letter refusing to vary the regulations in favour of Mr. Henty; as Stanley pointed out, his predecessor in office, Lord Ripon, had already considered the case. But though the Duke had failed with Thomas's first memorial James felt he might succeed with the new. On the 31st, alone, since William was on his honeymoon, James

called on the Duke of Richmond at Goodwood who received me most politely and asked me to have a day's shooting on the 1st we had a great deal of conversation and he promised to give me letters to Mr. S[pring] Rice and his private secretary Mr. [?] East.

The Duke was as good as his word, and the support of Spring Rice was sought by Lord Dudley Stuart, M.P., as well.

On the 9th of September James left his card at Lord Egremont's Brighton house, but Egremont was at Petworth; it was his last year as the county's Lord Lieutenant and he was growing old. But, for this unique Englishman, certain things still counted, even at eighty-three—needy English men and women, especially of Sussex and Yorkshire; English horses and English art. Not long before, two shiploads of families from his estates had migrated to Canada at his expense; this year in the spring he had given his usual fête to the poor, six thousand of them—'the gayest and most beautiful sight' ever seen by Charles Greville, who had seen everything worth recording in the lives of the rich.¹ He still welcomed artists to Petworth—Constable was there this very year, filling a large sketchbook with watercolours and drawings. Egremont would, one feels, have appreciated a first-hand account of the pedigree stock taken from Petworth to Swan River, relished hearing that his young Wanderer had survived to sire horses in Van Diemen's Land. But his lordship was not at home, the card was left, and the door closed. And since at that point the two ends of James's diary meet, the little book does not reveal whether or not such a conversation occurred on some later day.

James did not break resolutions, so it is certain that he replaced the book with another, a new one, but it is gone; the rest of his English doings emerge from two boxes of discoloured

¹ Charles Greville, *Memoirs*, vol. iii, pp. 36-38.

papers preserved in Henty houses at opposite ends of the world. From these pages—the formal or the heartfelt—it seems clear that a case such as the Hentys', fully put, was fully considered; personal influence secured consideration, but no more; a case was decided on its merits as the officials saw them. Equally clear is it, however, that the official mind measured merits chiefly by past precedents and future embarrassments, and it cannot be said that at any time it appeared to recoil from the task of saying No. And, as will appear, James's first direct communication from the Colonial Office was a definite No.

In one of the family boxes there is the draft of an appeal to Lord Western, after George III the first man in England to experiment in breeding merino sheep, and chairman of the Merino Society, founded in 1810. Thomas Henty had thought that Western would 'probably do me the honour to recollect me as a breeder of Merino sheep and a humble competitor at the annual exhibitions of the Merino Society some years ago'. Told by others that Western's interest could do anything, James had gone down to Felix Hall but found Western away; therefore as he told William, he wished to send Lord Western

the enclosed letter in Father's name the substance of which I read to him before I left V. D. Land and which he approved of. I have however inserted a little new matter and submitted it to Parker [?] who recommends my forwarding it soon.

Here there cropped up again the awkward business of Thomas's prolonged absence on the *Thistle* voyage:

As I shall have to write to [Lord Western] also I wish you would copy the letter and sign it with Father's name or he may think it odd that they should both be in the same hand writing. You can write it in your usual way and if you see any alteration necessary do not hesitate to make it. I shall send with my letter a copy of my application and the refusal and tell him that I was in hopes I should not have had occasion to trouble him in the business but the answer of Sir Geo. Grey¹ induces me to request his Lordship's interference in our behalf.

I expect to see Sir Geo. Grey tomorrow he has been out of Town and unwell. Being anxious that Lord Western's letter should be dispatched as soon as possible could you get it done and forward to me by Post this Evg so that I may be enabled to dispatch it tomorrow.

¹ Not seen. Grey became Under-Secretary for the Colonies during 1834.

I find not only from Parker but others that it is their invariable practice at the Colonial Office to refuse first applications so that I take the field again with more heart. Interest however is the great thing after all. What do you think of Sir C. Burrell, Lord Surry, or Harry D. Goring, I have a great mind to apply to the latter—I shall find out Sir Culling Smith after I have seen Sir Geo. Grey and perhaps Sir H. Bathurst.¹

Parker says an attorney at Law can practice in the Courts of V. D. Land as a Barrister,² but that it is a very bad practice and ought to be done away as it is at Sydney. Gellibrand is not a Barrister.—There will be an opportunity of writing to Stephen in a few days.

With best regards to Matilda,
Believe me always
Yours ever faithfully
JAS. HENTY

P.S. Have you heard anything more respecting the Funds for Investment.

James, writing in England in October 1834, headed the draft letter Launceston, 2 December 1833. William drew his pen firmly through certain redundancies, added two or three more expressions of respect, and then proceeded to practise, with some skill, his father's signature, his attempts decorating the blank space at the foot of the draft. No doubt, since it would have taken a year to get Thomas's own signature, it was a common-sense method of getting what they knew beyond all doubt their father would wish to have; still, it was very awkward. . . . Lord Western would indeed have thought it very odd. Was the final edition of the letter signed by the man of business or by his younger brother, the man of Law? There is nothing among the old papers to show whether Lord Western's help was secured.

Sir Culling Smith, whom James intended seeing, had first bestirred himself to help the Hentys in 1831, when James had written to him of their first disasters in the West and sent him a box of shells—a gift that strayed irrecoverably to Rotterdam instead of being landed at Cowes; he seemed really to care for

¹ Henry Goring, with Sir Charles Burrell, represented Shoreham; Col. Sir F. H. Bathurst was M.P. for Wilts., S.

² This is still the case, and applies also in South Australia and Western Australia. In 1891 it was made legal in Victoria, but has never been practised.

their predicament and for colonial news. Writing to William in 1832 with offers of help in the projected move to Van Diemen's Land, he had asked in a postscript

if the Swan River Wool which I see quoted, has been sent to England by your brother and if it is the growth of the country (from sheep bred in the country) or from sheep carried out there.

So the three bales shipped from Fremantle eleven months earlier by the *Thistle* had safely arrived.

In response to a letter from James, Culling Smith was prepared to help again in 1834. He answered from Caistor, Lincolnshire,

where I look upon myself very much in the light of a colonist, as I am bringing large tracts of waste land into cultivation. I was very glad to see your refutation of the [illegible] of a correspondent of the Times about the female emigrants to Australia.

He suggested that James should call upon his relative, Mr. Childers, the member for Cambridgeshire and

one of the Committee for forming the new Colony in Southern Australia, I am sure he would be very happy to see you, and to give you any advice he can about the application, to renew, or modify, which I conclude you are come to England.

And he was

much obliged to you for thinking of the seeds which will be taken care of, if sent to the care of my tailor, Mr. Lake, No. 2 South Molton Street. . . . Can you tell me whether they ought to be soaked, or prepared in any other way, before they are sown.

The new colony in South Australia mentioned by Sir Culling and discussed by James with Lord Chichester, long talked-of by private speculators and economists and resisted by successive governments, had only a week earlier been established by law. Its form was not as first proposed, when rumours of a private settlement at Port Lincoln had drawn from Dr. Collie his prophesy as to its probable fate. It was to be under government control, like the other colonies, but based on a different system from all of them, the system urged by Wakefield and his group. Land there was not to be free, or even cheap; the too easy acquisition of land, they said, resulted in a shortage of labour and was one of the main causes of failure of the settlement at

Swan River. Convinced by Wakefield that the free grant system was economically unsound, the Government had brought it to an end in the older colonies in 1831; it was Wakefield rather than Lord Ripon who had shattered the Hentys' hopes. The day after James's arrival in London his notebook records that he was visited by Gouger and Gilles, two of the men chiefly concerned in inaugurating the new colony; Gilles offered James his country house and 'professed great friendship'; obviously, the two theorists sought James out because, as a practical colonist, he could tell them much that it was useful to know. Perhaps it was from Gouger and Gilles that James learnt the exact boundaries allotted to the new British province, information that compelled a re-casting of the Hentys' application. Under the Act, the colony of South Australia was to extend from the 132nd to the 141st parallels and would therefore cover the greater part of the territory in which Thomas had asked to be allowed to select their land. It did not, however, include Portland Bay, but finished some forty miles to the west of it. There is evidence that from this time James ceased to support Thomas's memorial and instead asked for their 20,000 acres to be granted specifically at Portland Bay. But the Colonial Office was unable to adjust its geography. Land on the south coast of New Holland was simply on the south coast of New Holland and available exclusively to the new colony of South Australia. Officialdom disregarded the fact that outside the limits prescribed for that colony there was a considerable amount of the south coast left.

In February 1835 James presented his compliments to Mr. Hay and begged to enclose him 'a statement of the facts as connected with his Father's proposed application': clearly, a fresh proposal was being prepared to meet the new conditions, and was to be made in Thomas's name. James's covering note is preserved but not his statement; it does not appear that Hay responded to James's expression of readiness to make a personal call. There had been another political change and Hay submitted the statement to the new Secretary of State, Lord Aberdeen. In reply, Hay was directed to acquaint James that in April last [1834] the Lt. Governor of Van Diemen's Land submitted for the consideration of the Secretary of State an application from your Father nearly similar to that which you have presented

on his behalf, but that the proposals connected with it, were, on the 25th of October following, declined by Lord Aberdeen's Predecessor on the following grounds. 1st, that it would be an infringement of the general principle upon which the Crown Lands in Australia are now sold; and Secondly, that the range of Country in which your Father sought to obtain the Grant was principally within the District marked out for the formation of a new Colony under the Provisions of an Act of Parliament.¹

The proposal which you have now brought forward, differs in many respects from that which was submitted by your Father through the Lieutenant Governor, still the general objections which were then entertained to the original proposition are not removed, inasmuch as the Land applied for is situated in a District not open for general Settlement, and the Location of your family in that Quarter could not fail to be attended with serious inconvenience, in reference to similar applications from other persons, in which the Government could not acquiesce, and yet might be embarrassed in refusing.

This was surely the end.

It was Lord Surry who was to save James, to bring him at least a measure of success. Surry, too, belonged to Sussex, belonged even more than Egremont or Richmond or anyone else among the great men of the county, for his ancestors, in their Norman castle, like Thomas Henty's forebears in their flint farms, had belonged to it through centuries in an unbroken line. Son of the Duke of Norfolk, Surry was the first Catholic to be elected to the House of Commons after the passing of the Catholic Disabilities Removal Bill in 1829. In May of that year, when the advertisements of the *Caroline's* impending departure were appearing in *The Times*, its issue of the 8th reprinted a broadly sarcastic article from the *Brighton Gazette* asking how an election held in the shadow of Arundel Castle could have been *free* when one candidate was the Duke of Norfolk's son. It is probably beside the point that the duke owned property in Thomas's parish of Tarring; however Thomas thought about Catholic emancipation and however he cast his vote, at the time of leaving England he was on good terms with Surry and,

¹ Only one reason, the second, was given to the Hentys in the official letter from Montagu, Colonial Secretary under Governor Arthur, conveying the rejection by the Secretary of State. In his letter Montagu also mis-stated the amount of land asked for, naming it as 25,000 acres for Thomas 'and a similar amount for each of your sons': it was a total of 20,000 that was asked.

after the service that Surry was able to do him now, was his devoted man. Through Mr. Freeland, Surry's interest was won, and just in time. Four days after he received Hay's communication, the Chichester post brought James this gleam of hope:

Feb. 20th 1835

My dear Sir,

I met Lord Surry at a private Party the other night, and took advantage of the opportunity it afforded me of mentioning to his Lordship your Name, and the object you were endeavouring to accomplish. He entered upon the subject in the most kind and good natured Manner and assured me that it would give him pleasure to be useful to you. I asked him if he would allow you to call on him in Town, to which he readily assented. He told me he should go up to vote for the Speaker, but should return the next day, you may, however, be pretty sure of meeting with him next week, as he will of course return to vote on the Address. I think his Lordship is rather friendly than otherwise to the present Government; an application, therefore, from him in your favor would I have no doubt at this extremely critical Period meet with every attention. At present I can make no Interest for you in any other Quarter, but in case of a Change I may have a Chance of serving you. Excuse the haste in which I write,

& believe me

Ever yrs truly

J. B. FREELAND¹

Some time during the next three weeks Surry must have given James a chance to set his case before him in full, in terms that made no claim to land reserved for the new colony and emphasized that Portland Bay was outside that colony's limits and was the sole object of the Henty's hopes. Surry sent James's memorandum on to the Secretary of State with a request for his favourable consideration. Aberdeen's reply, dated 19 March and sent on by Surry to James, was written in tones of rebuke:

The Object which this Gentleman as well as his father, are desirous of accomplishing is one which could not, with propriety, receive encouragement from this Department, as being not only at

¹ James Bennett Freeland of Chichester m. 1813 Ann, d. of Thomas Henty's old friend Colonel William Humfry who had visited him in the *Forth* at Portsmouth. A son of Freeland was later one of Chichester's two Members of Parliament. J. B. Freeland seems to have had some special association with the Duke of Richmond, which has not been traced.

variance with the terms on which the waste Lands of the Crown are now disposed of in the Australian Colonies, but the Land itself being far beyond the Limits to which Settlers are restricted in their Locations.

The proposals of Mr. Henty's father when submitted to His Majesty's late Government, were consequently declined by my Predecessor, and the same principle which guided him regulated my proceedings in deciding upon the application subsequently brought forward by his Son.

I confess to your Lordship that I am much surprised at the step which Mr. Henty Senior, as represented by his Son, has taken, sufficient time not having elapsed for his becoming acquainted with the result of his application and being aware, as he must have been when he made arrangements for proceeding to his intended destination, that he could have no security that his residence there would be permitted to continue.

Under these circumstances, I regret to acquaint your Lordship that I cannot hold out to Mr. Henty the pledge which he requires viz. 'that in the event of the Districts in the Neighbourhood of Portland Bay ever becoming a permanent colony they will protect Mr. Henty in his rights of Settlement, that is they will not disturb but will confirm his possessions against any new comer'—

At this point, having refused, Lord Aberdeen appears to have weakened: one can almost feel the pause, as he sought the word that would compensate for the refusal and yet be safe. His shorthand writer sits in silence with poised pen: the voice goes on:

—although I am not prepared to say that Mr. Henty's pretensions to any land *actually brought into cultivation and surrounded by a proper fence*, would not be favorably looked upon by His Majesty's Government at a future period, should the encrease of the Population of New South Wales, or other circumstances, extend the Settlement of the Territory to the quarter where Mr. Henty may have established himself.

The italics are Aberdeen's own.

Lord Surry's covering note to James regretted that he had not been more successful. He would be at home any morning before eleven.

It was not everything, but it was much, and the Hentys were to rely on Aberdeen's statement for years to come. James was triumphant and sped away to Worthing and on to Chichester

to tell the news. It reached Thomas in August, and he at once wrote to John Street: 'It is possible', he said,

I may yet pay you a visit at some time or other—though being in my sixty first year, *I feel* I am getting older every day. My Animal Spirits are yet pretty good, notwithstanding the buffetting I have undergone—I was cheered by a letter Charles received yesterday from a friend at Arundel, who stated—'Your brother James called yesterday, *in high spirits*, on his road to visit his old friends the Humphry's at Chichester, and stated that the object of his visit to England, he had obtained, through the Earl of Surry' (I presume this is an exchange of Land to Portland Bay). It is curious that I should have dined with him a short time before I left England with a party of 14, a most jolly day—The next day he had much conversation about me and my family ending with a voluntary offer on his part to do anything and everything in his power to assist me—Unlike great men in general, he has followed it up by obtaining the object of my wishes—James has written fully by the 'John' which we expect every day. . . . We are all pretty well and much excited with our news.

'Lord Surry has behaved most nobly for us', Thomas told Edward (27.11.35), 'and I purpose getting up a collection of anything that is rare and worth Lady Surry's acceptance, it is due from us in gratitude for the kindness he has shewn my family.'

FAMILY LETTERS

MEANTIME, during 1835, work in Launceston, at Cormiston and Red Hill went on, and at the Bay; the *Thistle* carried letters on her journeys to and fro over the Strait; Frank sent a plan of the establishment, Edward reported progress, Thomas gave advice and the latest family news; while Mrs. Henty wrote chiefly of things sent for the better nourishment of her absent sons and urged caution in matters of health. Journal entries of work done show that their father's advice was followed, even if their mother's was not. Part of a letter remains, written by Mrs. Henty in January 1835, after the return of Henry Camfield from the Bay:

Mrs. Thomas Henty to her son Edward

(Undated)

My dear Edward,

I am very glad to find you are pleased with the Land you have seen since you have been settled and that you are altogether tolerably comfortable, but Mr. Camfield tells me you are looking thin, which I have no doubt from working so hard, I understand you work from light till dark which is too much for any one for a continuance, it may do for a few weeks, but if you go on long in that way the constitution becomes weak, and then if you take cold you will surely be ill—Charles tells me the *Thistle* goes next week I fear I have but little to send you our Dairying is over, the Cows are turned out, I make but few Cheeses as I cannot keep them well here, I have only one left, and if you have not eaten yours they will be spoiled—and the Preserves my dear Edward I sent for present eating as we shall send you more occasionally, they were not made for keeping, when I found the *Thistle* was going I had nearly half a Bushel of gooseberries gathered and preserved them immediately so that I beg you will not keep them to spoil. The Pickled Turnips will not I know keep, there is so much juice in the Turnips, I boiled them in a little Vinegar for you to eat instead of Vegetables—The Butter in the ceg would have been good if I had not foolishly put cabbage leaves, not thinking at that time that it is always damp on Board Ship, tho it would not have been so good as that in the jar as that was Mrs. Bryan's, and all made at one time a few days before it was sent I shall send you a jar this time but it has been made some time as we only make now barely enough for our own use.

Thomas wrote in April, when Stephen, taking Camfield away with him, had left Launceston once more for the Swan; they travelled in the barque *John Adams*, chartered by Stephen to carry sheep to Fremantle for Governor Stirling's officers. The plan, when made in Fremantle some months before, had evoked comment from the *Perth Gazette* (13.12.34):

Wool affords a cheerful prospect to those who have the means to embark in this speculation. Nothing can more speedily contribute to our prosperity than our adventures in Sheep; it was therefore, with the utmost satisfaction that we heard of a final arrangement having been made with Mr. S. G. Henty, who has freighted the *Adams* for 600 fine wooled sheep, to be imported within six months from this time. This is as it should be.

Stephen, then in Fremantle, had made the arrangement with Captain Mills of the barque *John Adams* when the ship called there on her way from England. The captain evidently took strong steps to prevent his client's plan from reaching the ears of possible rivals in Van Diemen's Land and Sydney, as appears from the *Perth Gazette* of 20 December:

It was rumoured early this week that the Captain of the *Adams* had refused to take a mail from this port, either for England or Van Diemen's Land; on enquiry, however, we found that his objection merely applied to the Colonies, he presuming that any intelligence conveyed to our neighbours would thwart his speculation, and affect the interests of Mr. S. G. Henty, who had chartered the vessel to bring back sheep, between 6 and 700 having been engaged by different settlers, at the rate of 35s per head, deliverable at Fremantle. This may be considered a very natural precaution, and perfectly justifiable by the honourable rules of mercantile usage; but knowing, as we do, how much it is fraught with injurious effects to both public and private interests, we call upon our contemporaries in decrying so cruel a practice. In justice to Captain Mills, we must state, that the rumour of his refusal to convey an English mail—not the most desirable subject of merriment—was founded on a joke, and in the absence of any power to enforce captains of vessels to take mails, we are indebted to his courtesy for receiving it.

Next year, on his way from Launceston to fulfil his contract, Stephen was unable to carry out his wish to land some sheep at Portland Bay *en route*. On 13 March 1835, as Edward was busy

weatherboarding his house, he saw the *Adams* heave in sight three miles distant from the Lawrence Rock; he lit a big smoke on the North Bluff, but the *Adams* did not signal and with the wind from the south-east sailed on for the Sound. Edward noted all this in the journal and apparently mentioned it in a letter to his father that is lost.

Thomas Henty to his son Edward. Cormiston 11th April, 1835

My Dear Edward,

I am glad to find you are going on so well, and that the Stock and Sheep are going on in such good Health. If you can put up a temporary shed to keep them dry in the Rainy Winter, which *you may expect*, it will preserve many more of your lambs, in the lambing season. Everything in Sheep farming depends upon *even keep* and Shelter during the Wet Winter, and not turning your young lambs out too soon—I have no Bull, but the two Alderney ones—If I cannot procure a better I shall send him by the Elizabeth, if she can take him—The Thistle is off this House, and is so crowded, that it is impossible for her to take any Stock, but Pigs.—She takes some Men for you—If you can cut some Grass for Hay in lambing time, you will find it of the greatest advantage—I do not think it worth while to send any Poultry for breeding this time, I shall wait till the Spring as you will want Corn to keep them during the Winter—

I have had some fears respecting Stephens speculation, but he is sanguine of doing no harm, if he does not do much good—He took up 1005 Sheep, 4 Cows, and a Horse, Camfield and a Mr. Taylor¹ to King George's Sound. Camfield is got quite old Womanish—was stark mad in love with Miss Ralston, who did not agree to trust herself with him to the Swan.² I do not think his written account an unfavourable one, but on the contrary a very fair one. He is vacillating in every thing, except in the value of his property at the

¹ Patrick Taylor, arr. Fremantle 19.8.34 in the *James Pattison*, weather-bound at King George's Sound for two months with the Stirlings and Mrs. Bussell and Mary on board. Taylor wished to return to the Sound to settle and left Fremantle in the *Hyacinth*, sloop-of-war, to be landed there but was carried on by Captain Blackwood (Captain Alexander Cheyne, *Diary*, 27.3.35, *W.A. Arch.*). From Hobart, where he was landed, Taylor went north, staying at Cormiston as a guest of the Hentys. Thomas Henty described him to William, his son, as 'a very pleasant well-educated gentlemanly young man' who had come out for the benefit of his health and had entirely recovered. 'I hear he has an income of £1400 a year', Thomas remarked; 'he passed his time very pleasantly with us'. But Taylor afterwards gave an unfavourable account of Van Diemen's Land, 'particularly as to the state of the Society' (Cheyne, *op. cit.*). Taylor married Mary Bussell at Fremantle, 18.9.37.

² The beautiful Anna Ralston, tall and grey-eyed and sweet of face, daughter of John Ralston of Logan Falls and subsequently the wife of Allan MacKinnon of Dalness (family information, through K. von Stieglitz).

Swan. Stephen's money affairs are good. His contract is *a written one*, to supply the Governor and the public officers with six hundred Sheep *for Cash*, that is, Treasury Bills.—I hope and believe the voyage likely to be a good one—He stated to me that notwithstanding payments are bad, he has done well this year [i.e. in trading at the Fremantle store]. Bryan and Jane found us in the 'Adams' at George Town on their return from Sydney; he had the offer of Seven Hundred Head of Cattle at 27*s* per head—*We wait for News from James*—I had a letter from him by the 'Nimrod' dated 15th Sept^r—He had an interview not only with the Duke of Richmond, but with Lord Chichester the latter sent a message through William that he should be glad to see him, and from both he had a flattering reception—The latter said that in common justice Mr. Spring Rice¹ ought to give us 20,000 acres (the amount he asks for) at Portland Bay—but James says do not place any confidence in my success, but as far as industrious perseverance goes, you may depend upon me—Charles has had letters since, which are not very sanguine of success—a new change in the Ministry has taken place, which makes me more than ever most anxious of a letter from him. The Duke of Wellington's party comes in—This lets in the Interest of Lord Egremont, and Sir Culling Smith—I hope for the best—still, I fear the worst. I have no stock to spare and both Cattle and Sheep are, for this place, very dear. I have altogether sold Rams to the amount of 115 guineas—Brown and Jeffkins [bushrangers] are shot, but it is pretty well ascertained that Britton with a native born youth, are still in the bush. Moggy White is convicted of being connected with the party, and of receiving a watch from them, sentence, transportation for 14 years [i.e. to Port Arthur in Van Diemen's Land]. The Elizabeth being to sail for Portland Bay as soon as she returns from Sydney, I hope to hear from James and give you the news from England—The Vibelia is expected daily at Hobart Town with Wilmore's Brother on board—Thomson is arrived in the Lochail from Leith. We were pleased with Frank's plan of the premises—The Tarring [a ship's boat, certainly a craft of their own naming] sunk with the Chalk on board, which was lost; the Cork was out—If you can with safety send me a bag of Ch[alk] taken from near the *footpath* on the Road from the huts [to the] House, you will perceive Two Trees torn up near the pa[th] dig there and get that which has not been exposed to the su[n] and air—It is quite a different thing from that fronting the beach, this from exposure, is more a limestone—the other is more mellow, and more free—If you try a little in

¹ Thomas Spring Rice, at the time Secretary of State for War and the Colonies in the Whig Ministry.

your Garden it will be a *useful* and a very *pleasing* Experiment upon the black and brown soil I am persuaded it will be your best manure—upon a square, dig some in about 6 inches—upon another square adjoining, lay some upon fresh dug land, and let it remain during the Winter—both should be beaten out very small—none bigger than Duck Eggs—Bryan's trial with Ashburner comes on in about three weeks time, and also for speaking disrespectfully to Judge Montague. I wish him well out of it.¹ He sold his steamer in Sydney for £7000. He has in contemplation of sending a Thousand Ewes to Portland Bay—I hope to get some information from England before he does it—Upon the whole I think we have done right in squatting at the Bay—but I still wish to have a confirmed right from Government, and by that means to secure *if possible the Fishery* there—I do not like the Natives. If you can, do by all means conciliate them—Be always prepared with your Arms in good order, for the worst, although I hope you never will have occasion to use them, even in your own defence—It is a valuable discovery, your finding the Spring. If the water is now low, dig it deeper if you can. Give my love to Frank, and wishing you both good health and Success, I am

Your affectionate Father

THO^S HENTY

I will send Trees Raspberrys, etc. by the Elizabeth. I send a few of my best sorts of Potatoes for seed Charles will no doubt take care for flour.

The affair of the bushrangers, mentioned by Thomas, took place not far from Port Sorell, to the west of Tamar Heads. Three shell lime-burners, working on a small isthmus, were suddenly confronted by the ragged figures of Browne and Jeffkins, both 'wanted' men. The runaways were almost too weak from starvation to stand, but, being armed they were able to tie up two of the lime-burners and to order the third to cook them a meal. The five men were moving to a bark hut beside a nearby creek when they ran into a party of constables out looking for the bushrangers. Browne at once shot Constable Smith and was then himself shot by Constable Buckley; a third constable, James Smeed, then shot Jeffkins. As was usual, the police were themselves convicts, appointed to the government service, Smeed being a 'lifer' officially listed as No. 187, per *Governor Ready*; each received £33. 6s. 8d., his share of the price

¹ No trial of Sam Bryan has been traced, but see Ch. 10, this Part.

on the bushrangers' heads, and Smeed and Buckley £30 as well and a free pardon.¹ There can be small doubt that the lime-burners were those visited three months later by John Batman, wind-bound at this spot on his first voyage to Port Phillip Bay.²

The steamer that Bryan sold in Sydney for £7,000 was the *Tamar*, built in Glasgow as a speculation by a group of leading Launceston men for service on the river and brought out under sail in 1834.³ The venture failed; Sam bought her, and he and Jane travelled in her to Sydney in December that year. There the *Australian* of New Year's Day described her as

a very complete vessel of the kind, 140 tons, 60 hp engines, a pretty model of a steamer, cabins fitted out in the most complete and elegant manner. The cabin fire-place is the neatest thing of the kind we ever saw on board a vessel.

The Bryans returned to Van Diemen's Land to the embarrassments of the trial mentioned by Thomas with some foreboding: well might Sam's father-in-law wish him well out of it.

Perhaps it was Thomas's fault that Frank missed his passage in the *Lavinia*. When Frank arrived at Cormiston from Launceston on his way to join the ship, already part way down the river, Thomas took up his pen to give Edward an account of the family doings in a letter to be carried by Frank to the Bay. The letter shows no signs of haste; it was mid winter, and Frank may have been glad enough to stretch his long legs by the fire while his father's leisurely quill traced its pattern on the double page:

Thomas Henty to his son Edward.

Cormiston 7th July 1835

My dear Edward,

Frank is just come down and the *Lavinia* is at Stevenson's bend and will proceed on to your place—I wish to send you some Heifers, now nearly 1 year old, but I find the Vessel is full, perhaps it is better they should not go at this time of the year—I saved about 50 calves last season, and I have 5 fallen already—upon the whole we have about 60 head at Red Hill and about 160 of all sorts here, and at Red Hill more than 500 Sheep, and more than 200 Lambs—I expect about 40 more from the 250 ewes—I have 34 Rams twelve

¹ *Corn. Chron.* 14 and 21.2.35.

² Batman's journal, quoted by Bonwick, *Port Phillip Settlement*, p. 176. The journal is now in the *Melb. Arch.*

³ Ernest Whitfeld, *The River Tamar*, Laun., 1912.

W. H. Henty's House, Portland Bay



W. H. Henty's House, Portland Bay
6 Oct. 1835

34. THE HENTY'S HOUSE, PORTLAND BAY
Drawn by J. H. Wedge, 6 October 1835



35. NATIVE CORROBOREE, NEW SOUTH WALES

From a drawing on the title-page of Major Mitchell's 'Three Expeditions into the Interior of Australia', Vol. II

of which I have sold to Bryan for £60 G^s—this is all the right way—

I think I have found out the wholesale Sheep stealer, and hope to catch him eventually—I ear marked 53 thorough Merinos (Lambs) yesterday, I have nearly twenty more, and several more I expect out of 100 Ewes—If I do not have them stolen, I shall increase my Stock, I hope considerably another year—but as they come into repute, the more likely are they to be stolen—

I am delighted to find the Whaling is going on so well, and I hope you will also make a profitable season—I hear you suffer from your old complaint, let me advise you to describe it to Dr. Landale, and if a Truss is necessary have a Truss, or you may eventually repent neglecting it—

Stephen is gone exploring with Mr. Taylor towards King George's Sound—He writes, that he shall clear *Two hundred Pounds by his Trip*—I am most happy to say that up to this time all that Charles has touched appears to be successful and if the Two vessels of James's arrive out safe, I trust it will add much to their profits, and success; which will make it better for all of you.

The Bank pays a dividend of $7\frac{1}{2}$ Per Cent. for the half year—All is still uncertain yet, about Land. James had an interview with Lord Dudley Stuart, and he was going to see Mr. Spring Rice the next Morning, but on that Morning the wigs were turned out—The New Ministry are doubtful of holding their places. I find, a fine tract of Land has been discovered at Swan River, on Bannister's track, to King George's Sound—

My Horses are going on well—Octavious's Colt has suffered much from Strangles, and I thought he would have died but since it burst, he has recovered—It will lessen his size something, I fear—Merino is in foal to Wanderer, and Octavia and Kangaroo to Littlejohn. The Peter Finn Mare also to the former—I have also bought a mare of Jas Griffiths for £24-10 very cheap, she is covered, and I believe in foal to Wanderer. Mr. Thomson and family are come out, they live where Powlet did live, and hold, and use that farm—He is muddling on, and will not, I think, make his rent of it.

I had a great deal of Smut in my Wheat last year, I have sold but little yet, I should, if I could thrash it out, be glad to do so, as Wheat is now worth 8 to 9/- per bushel—

I have plowed up, and sown Stonehouse's Paddock nearly, with Wheat, & 6 acres besides. I take Bonny's, but have done nothing to it yet—The Barn has tumbled in—

Stephen left 15 Sheep behind, I have 8 Lambs from them.

God bless you and may you prosper in all your undertakings.

Your Mother has written to you believe me to be

Your affectionate Father

THO^S HENTY

Thomas addressed the letter to Edward at Portland Bay, South-West Australia, sealing the folded sheet with red wax and a signet ring. Frank, with the letter in his pocket, pursued the *Lavinia* to Stevenson's Bend and found her gone.

BRINGING A WIFE FOR CHARLES

LIFE for James during that year in England was not all business. Charlotte had a second son, Herbert, in October 1834; not long afterwards James fell seriously ill of cholera in London, where the disease had arrived from India via Persia and Russia a few years before. During convalescence he visited John Street's family at Birtley, and some time after returning to Launceston wrote to Street of the visit, hinting that its pleasures and the revival of the English scene had excited him more than he was prepared to say. 'We are', he wrote,

such matter of fact people in this Hemisphere I should perhaps say these Colonies that to indulge in anything like imagination or feeling would only subject the unhappy individual to the merciless railings of his ever apathetic fellow Colonists—I shall therefore (not that I fear such from you) proceed with my matter of fact account of my visit to Birtley etc.

A severe attack of Cholera during the time all London was aghast at the burning of the Houses of the Lords and Commons sent me quickly into the country, convalescent.¹ I embarked on the Chichester 'Duke of Richmond' and landed at the White Hart, Guildford, where all smiles Miss Bourne welcomed me as usual.

I posted instanter down the street and called on Mr. Sparkes who after deluging me with Cherry Brandy etc. ordered his Gig and Groom and sent me down in gentlemanlike style to Birtley where I was as much at home as I was fifteen years before the only difference apparent to me was that instead of a house full of people Henry² and his Lady without encumbrance (as the phrase goes) were the only occupants.

Alterations no doubt improvements, have been made, it was however Birtley still and to me one of the dearest spots I ever visited.

¹ The fire of 16 October 1834, followed a decision to abandon the use of wooden tallies by which Exchequer accounts had been kept for some hundreds of years. The mass of tallies, accumulated in the basement, was ordered to be burnt; the fire spread to a flue and started the blaze that destroyed the Houses (C. P. Harper, *London: Yesterday, To-day and Tomorrow*, 1925).

² Henry was John Street's half-brother and the owner of Birtley, the family property from the days of James II. Henry had been recently married to 'his Lady', Barbara Campbell, his first wife (*Street Family*, pp. 19, 20).

To beat, with one Pointer, the Deans, the Brook and Westland, to kill our brace or two of Pheasants, one or two Partridges, to dine with William and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Sparkes, the old Lady, Frances, Jane and Ellen, with Bob French from Littlehampton, was as much a matter of course with me as if I had never rounded the Globe or ventured my own dear self on Blue Water.¹ A round of similar engagements completely reinstated me and at the end of a week under a conditional promise to come again I was compelled to proceed to Horsham where Henry always the best of friends kindly took me in his gig.

If ever you return to that part of little England you will find great, very great alterations of every kind and I will venture to say judging from myself notwithstanding all the kindness all the hospitality you will receive that you will wish yourself back among the brown trees of Australia and the extensive uplands of Bathurst Plains. . . .

It is easy to see that, despite such happy interludes, James had felt no regrets as the time for their return to Launceston came near.

James and Charlotte and their two children and servants sailed from Plymouth for Van Diemen's Land at the end of June. Travelling with them also was Miss Susan Boniface, who was to marry Charles. Thomas was much pleased with her and described her to Street as an accomplished, pleasant young woman who played beautifully upon the piano and had long ago attracted his son. Her company on board must have done much to reconcile Charlotte to the prospect of yet another voyage. The barque *Ann*, 339 tons, and her captain, John Virtue, turned out a good choice: the ship was well found in sails and gear, the food was ample; except for the occasional displays of ill-feeling and bad manners inevitable among people too long and too closely confined, the company was congenial enough. In the few altercations between passengers and captain, this time James took no part; he reserved his displeasure for Lieut. Dyball and his wife, who sat in the cabin with the *Monthly Magazine* before them throughout Divine Service conducted there by James, and for a Mr. Hesketh whose continuous intoxication and outrageous conduct at one time compelled Mrs. Henty and Miss Boniface to absent themselves altogether

¹ The 'old Lady' was John Street's step-mother; Mrs. Sparkes, Frances, Jane and Ellen four of his five half-sisters; William, one of his two full brothers; the Deans, Brook and Westland were farms or holdings (*Street Family*, pp. 28, 29).

from the cabin table. When Mr. Dyball insulted Captain Virtue, James sprang to the captain's defence; he had no hard words for him even when, because of Captain Virtue's wrong order, given accidentally, the boom broke off and crashed on deck, nearly striking James. His success in England, and perhaps the presence on board of Susan, fresh to the events of life at sea, may have helped to make James an easy passenger on this, his third voyage across the world. There was little monotony; each month a number of vessels was seen, some for a day or two keeping neighbourly company; brigs, barques, ships, whalers, galliots—James knew and noted them all in the other half of the book that had recorded the days in the *Forth*. Was Susan surprised at her future brother-in-law's familiarity with vessels and their rig? His knowledge was probably no greater than was possessed by any of the other gentlemen on board. In the days before steam, male passengers were idlers only in fine weather, for in a storm or an emergency they were called upon to help the deck hands.

Fine weather encouraged idling for everyone as they approached the blue waters of the Canary Islands. They passed two fine turtle asleep, rounded to, and lowered the boat; but the turtles awoke in time. As the *Ann* ran down the Madeira coast, James drew its mountainous outline in the book with the Fremantle sketches of 1829; a week later they reached Porto Praya, St. Jago, in the Cape Verde Islands, their only port of call. James and the captain at once went ashore to call on Mr. Merrill, the American Consul, and to order supplies of fruit, poultry, and water, and to visit the town. A panoramic drawing in the sketch book shows the buildings, flags flying, perched on the cliff with the mountains behind and, riding the bay below, two Portuguese schooners and an American ship, the *Augusta*, bound for Buenos Aires. James found the town a miserable place, but its aloes and palms and peaks, even its mixed population, may have had foreign charms for Charlotte and Susan when they went ashore next day.

July 19: 1935 Visited the town at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8 a.m. with Mrs. Henty and Miss Boniface called at the Consuls and introduced them to Mrs. Merrill and Miss Pindon the Consul's wife's sister. Shewed them the Town Gardens etc. and called upon a Portuguese Medical Man and his lady who had sent requesting us to call for the purpose

of trying her Piano. Returned on board with the Consul and all the Ladies to dinner.

The *Augusta's* captain, Davis, and her supercargo, Mr. Hale, 'an intelligent young man' from Boston, also dined; unfortunately the motion of the *Ann* at anchor affected the ladies. In the next day or two James had much conversation with Mr. Hale about the Australian market and bought fifty-six dozen straw hats from him for £34. 13.

On the intended day of sailing one of the few troublesome incidents of the voyage occurred.

July 20. . . . Returned on board after closing a/cs and prepared to get under weigh when a serious disturbance broke out between Capt. Virtue and the Crew. The former brought a Pistol on deck and during the fray it went off and slightly wounded a man named Jack Williams. Boat dispatched to the Consuls and returned without effecting any result. . . .

July 21. . . . The ship's company refused to work when Capt. Virtue took two men (Henderson and Williams) on shore and consulted with the Consul and returned on board an explanation then took place and the men returned to their duty got under weigh with a light wind from S.E. @ $\frac{1}{2}$ past 10 a.m. and stood to the Southward. Took with us a plentiful supply of Pine Apples, Oranges, Lemons, Bananas, Tamarinds, Limes and Straw Hats from the American.

In the three and a half month's voyage James got only one chance to visit another ship at sea. While the *Ann* lay at Porto Praya an American whale-ship, the *Columbus*, had put in to land a man, and sailed again the same day. Several weeks later the *Ann* spoke her on her way to New Zealand on a whaling voyage; her captain came on board to dine and James went back with him to look at the whaler. He thought 'she appeared tolerably efficient though not in that nice order English whalers are accustomed to be kept in'. The *Ann* had passed several sperm whales after leaving Porto Praya but the *Columbus* had not seen a fish.

By September they were in the lower latitudes of the Southern Indian Ocean and idling days were no more; notes of breezes were replaced by gales and squalls and lightning, by confused seas

breaking occasionally nearly as high as the Main Top. The Ship

comparatively easy and shipping no water. Fire balls were seen distinctly on the Royal and Mizzen Topmast Head.

Next day there were continued squalls with heavy rain. During days like this the women, imprisoned below, could only sit and employ their hands as much as the dim light and the rolling ship allowed, and comfort each other and the children when the noise above grew hard to bear.

Sept. 8th. blowing very hard. Unbent the Main Top sails Main Top Gallant sail and bent others repaired on the Yards the Fore Top sail and Main Sail. Unfurled the Fore Top Sail and fore Sail double reefed the Main Top sail Set fore Top Mast stay sail furled everything else. Wind N.W. ship quite easy.

Sept. 9th. Hard gale with heavy Squalls of rain and Hail Wind W. Ship rolling very heavily and shipping Water occasionally. Men employed repairing sails and other jobs about the ship.

Sept. 10th. Gale continues with occasional interruptions. . . . Ships cheese expended—supplied Capt. Virtue with one belonging to T. H. [? Thomas Henty] weight $42\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. Men repairing the sails.

Next day—a Friday, as the crew probably did not forget—still blowing very hard with tremendous squalls of thunder and lightning,

At $\frac{1}{2}$ past 12 am. the Electric matter struck the Ship passing along the decks, Masts and in fact all over the Ship in reaching the Deck it exploded with a report as loud as a large Gun. The man Joe was in the forecastle and received a violent blow on the arm as he was in the act of lighting his Pipe, the Boy Frederick was struck in the Boat across the Knees by the fluid with he described as if a spar or boom has been thrown across his legs. Through the blessing of divine Providence no person received further injury. The electric fluid passed on its course about the Deck the pen which contained the Pigs one of which was found immediately after dead, no doubt killed by the lightning, it weighed about 80 lbs. and before day-light was swollen nearly double its ordinary size. The fact of our having in the course of three days having twice been struck by lightning without injury to any individual on board is most extraordinary and deserves in an especial manner our hearty though humble thanksgiving for the mercy extended to us by the Almighty dispenser of events. Had the fluid struck any person fully it must have totally annihilated him. At 3 o'clock P.M. a heavy sea struck the Larboard Quarter Boat, broke her back and otherwise injured her, it was

deemed advisable to cut her away which was accordingly done. The ship during the day and night was occasionally struck by seas though very little water came on board owing to the buoyancy and good qualities of the Ship.

On Sunday, 13 September, the weather was fine and thanksgiving prayers were read in the cabin for their miraculous preservation; 'Longitude 43.5 Latitude 36.44 Barometer 30.3½ Bet Capt. Virtue a new Hat that we are not in the Tamar in 28 days from this'. Witnesses to this wager were Lieut. Dyball and Mr. Hesketh; perhaps the electric storm had cleared the air in more ways than one.

On 14 October the *Ann* laboured against a heavy head sea to enter the dangerous waters of Bass Strait. Captain Virtue had already lost his bet. With the sun obscured, their exact position was uncertain, and James's journal notes 'Great anxiety evinced in consequence of the short distance to run to the Land about Cape Otway by chronometer'. At twelve noon the ship was hove to for three hours under double reefed trysail and topsail; at three, steering close hauled, they made their way cautiously ENE.; at 9 p.m. a heavy sea carried away the hand rails and bulwarks on the weather bow. Next morning the gale had moderated:

At 10 a.m. Cape Otway in sight distant 30 Miles, which was at first mistaken for King's Island. Weathered the Cape and stood on close hauled to the Eastward with a light breeze.

Captain Virtue's anxieties were over. But as the ship neared the Van Diemen's Land coast his passengers felt personal anxieties revive that had been lulled during the months at sea. Friends, parents, children, the business that provided daily bread—would all be well, or was bad news waiting to greet them at Tamar Heads? Susan, who had not seen Charles for four years, had an anxiety all her own; Charlotte, thinking of the *Atwick*, knew just how Susan felt.

As they moved along the coast James sketched Hunter's Island, Hummock Island, unnamed stretches of cliff and mountain and the hills east of Port Sorell. On Sunday the 18th Low Head Light House was in sight; at midday

the Edward Schooner came alongside and Capt. Jacobs came on board told us all the news which thanks be to God was all favorable

—at 1 o'clock Cordell the Pilot came off at 3 entered the Heads and anchored in Kelso Bay.

The George Town semaphore had signalled the *Ann*'s arrival to Launceston's station on Windmill Hill; that night James made his last note for the voyage: 'At 6 p.m. Charles came down quite well and truly happy was the meeting.'

DISPERSION WILL GO ON

UNDOUBTEDLY the most important public event that James had to hear about was the affair of Port Phillip Bay. He knew nothing whatever about it, since it had all happened during his last weeks in England and the voyage in the *Ann*.

When Frank missed the *Lavinia* he took his passage in the next vessel, the cutter *Mary Ann*, but though she left the Tamar on 17 August it was 6 October before she anchored at her only advertised destination, Portland Bay: in the weeks between, she had paid a visit to 'the New Country', Port Phillip Bay. From there a fellow passenger with Frank was J. H. Wedge, the one-time indignant opponent of squatting on the south coast of New Holland but now, having resigned the government service, one of fifteen gentlemen of Van Diemen's Land who had just possessed themselves of half a million acres there, on the shores of Port Phillip Bay. Launceston had been talking of nothing else but the venture of these men, headed by John Batman of Kingston, supported by his friends J. T. Gellibrand, solicitor and late Attorney-General of the Colony, and Surveyor Wedge; two others were Captain Thomas Bannister, the overlander from Perth to King George's Sound, now Sheriff of Hobart Town, and Henry Arthur, the Launceston Collector of Customs and nephew of the Governor. The group called themselves the Port Phillip Association¹ and were said at the time, perhaps without any justification, to have the covert backing of the Governor himself.² Years before, Batman and Gellibrand had wished to settle at Westernport, but their application to Governor Darling in

¹ A detailed account of the Association and of John Pascoe Fawkner is given by James Bonwick in *Port Phillip Settlement*.

² '... we think we can discover in Mr. Bateman's embassy, a something beyond a wild goose scheme. It was reported about Town, that he was employed by the Governor to scour the country, and find, if possible, the *ground work* for His Excellency to build another Government upon, but such a report is too futile to be credited' (*Corn Chron.* 16.5.35). 'It is rumoured that our Lieutenant-Governor is not unfriendly to the scheme as at present carried on; and looks moreover upon the locality as forming an enviable addition to his proper government of Van Diemen's Land' (*Laun. Adv.* 10.3.36).

Sydney had been refused; with Wedge they had then planned to explore New Holland from the Gulf of Carpentaria to the seaboard in the south, had discussed their project with Governor Arthur and believed they had secured his active support. Finding later that Arthur had not pursued what they had taken to be his promise to interest the British Government, they reverted to their first idea of looking for sheep country across Bass Strait. This time they postponed asking any authority for leave: Batman, taking three white men as servants, and seven semi-civilized New South Wales blacks to help friendly contact with the natives, sailed for Port Phillip in the schooner *Rebecca* in May 1835. He carried with him the map from *The Voyage of the Investigator*, published in 1814, in which Flinders had included the river at the head of the bay and other information gained by Surveyor-General Grimes in walking round Port Phillip Bay in 1803. In June Batman was back in Launceston, talking with enthusiasm of the finest basin of water, and the most extensive plains, that he had ever seen; of the rich black soil and the kangaroo grass, waist high, the considerable river at the head of the port, and of the friendly natives who had agreed so readily to his suggestion that they should part with their land. Six hundred thousand acres of pasture were his in consideration of the promise of an annual tribute and an immediate gift of blankets, tomahawks, knives, looking glasses, scissors, handkerchiefs, flour, and shirts. To put everything on a proper footing Gellibrand had prepared a treaty on parchment and in triplicate, with livery of seisin properly endorsed; one copy was presumably left with the supposed chiefs of the tribe of Jagga Jagga, who did Give Grant Enfeoff and Confirm to Batman, his heirs and assigns all that tract of country running from forty miles north east of the River nearly to the entrance of the Port and covering the territories of Dutigalla and Geelong; of the other two copies one was retained for the Association and the other sent to Governor Arthur with a full report, which was acknowledged in a letter skilfully combining caution and warmth.¹

¹ Printed by Bonwick, op. cit., pp. 210-11. Arthur ends his mixture of congratulations, regrets, and warnings with a reference to the refusal of the Home Government to accede to the proposal of Mr. Henty to be allowed to locate a grant of land on the southern coast of New Holland.

As can be seen from the contemporary press, Batman and his friends talked freely of their plans, both before and after this expedition. Frank Henty was in a position to hear all the gossip at first hand, for he was in Launceston when Batman got back with his treaty in his pocket and set the town buzzing with his tales. There was a certain amount of public merriment over the document,¹ but Arthur, at least officially, treated the claim with all seriousness and forwarded a copy of the treaty with Batman's report to the Colonial Office.² While rightly discouraging the association from expecting that the Crown would confirm the treaty, affecting land, as he told Batman, not within the jurisdiction of Van Diemen's Land though divided from its most fertile portion by only a few hours' sail, he made Batman's report the opportunity to urge again that his own government's powers should be extended to the mainland. In his letter to Spring Rice written on 4 July he pointed out that

the settlement of this district would unquestionably be highly advantageous to Van Diemen's Land. Its extensive plains and rich pastures are capable of supporting large herds of cattle and sheep, and, as the distance between the two coasts might be traversed by a steam-boat in about twenty-four hours, it might rapidly be covered with flocks and herds from this Colony. Indeed I have no doubt that the foundation would soon be laid for a very beneficial intercourse between the two countries.

It would afford me, therefore, great pleasure, were the facilities which might be afforded by this Government rendered available in the settlement of this very valuable territory, which might, I submit, with a view to economy, be placed temporarily under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of Van Diemen's Land.

Arthur then wrote to Bourke, with consequences that might have been expected from that undeviating man; but before the resulting proclamation to intruders could reach Van Diemen's Land Arthur wrote to the Colonial Office again, and this time to Glenelg. In framing the following paragraphs he apparently chose to forget the opinion of his Solicitor-General, given him only a year before, that the territory in question was Governor Bourke's and that Arthur, if he went there, would be

¹ *Colonial Times* (Hobart), quoted in *Corn. Chron.* 15.8.35; *True Colonist* (Hobart) quoted in *Corn. Chron.* 26.9.35.

² Bonwick, *op. cit.*, pp. 331-3.

as much a trespasser as the squatters he wished to exclude; it was surely disingenuous to write as follows:

I have not seen any copy of Sir Richard Bourke's commission and therefore do not know whether Port Phillip is included within His Excellency's jurisdiction; if it be, all that is proper, will be, I am persuaded, speedily done for asserting the rights of the Crown; but if the country be not within the boundaries of the Government of New South Wales, then I recommend that a military officer be sent from hence, as Commandant, with a small detachment, and that a surveyor, a medical officer, and a missionary be employed under him, with a few convicts of long approved character, as mechanics and labourers, to form the Settlement, to establish a friendly intercourse with the natives, and to duly control any 'Squatters', that an accurate knowledge of the country may be gained, and all the necessary preliminaries adjusted for its occupation, under such regulations as His Majesty's Government may deem most desirable; by this means, at a very trifling expense, which may be defrayed from our land revenue, the country may be occupied without those sad reverses which checked emigration to Swan River. . . .¹

Soon Arthur was to receive from Bourke a copy of the proclamation that once and for all made the position clear. This was dated 26 August 1835, and warned all subjects of His Majesty that any treaty with the natives, such as Batman's, was void, as against the rights of the Crown, and that the Crown had invested the Governor of New South Wales with authority over the territory from Cape York in the extreme north of the continent to Wilson's Promontory in the south, and to the westward as far as the 129th degree of longitude. The proclamation was published throughout Van Diemen's Land in September: never again, in this matter, would Arthur be able to claim ignorance or doubt. Nevertheless he could not bear to let go; writing to Glenelg some months later (28.1.36) to send him Wedge's description of the Association's territory, he says

As Dutergalla is so near Van Diemen's Land and especially the Northern portion of the Island, it was my wish to have taken an active interest in its settlement. I have, however, perceived from the perusal of a Proclamation by Sir Richard Bourke defining the limits of his Government, that it forms an integral portion of the Colony of New South Wales, and of course I have, in consequence, deter-

¹ Bonwick, *op. cit.*, pp. 334-5.

mined not to interfere with his Excellency's jurisdiction, retaining as I nevertheless continue to do the strongest desire that some sort of Government should be established there, and impressed as I am with the importance as I have suggested to Sir Richard Bourke of appointing a resident authority for the purpose of preventing the intermixture with the settlers of Runaway Convicts, and of above all, maintaining some uniform course such as after patient enquiry may appear to be best adapted for the purpose of conciliating the natives, and preventing bloodshed.¹

When Batman left Port Phillip in June to bring his news and his treaty back to Launceston, to guard the rights of the Association he left a party twelve miles within the Heads at a point that Flinders had named Indented Head. In July the party was joined by Wedge and Batman's brother Henry, Henry's wife and their four little girls. The newcomers found there neat thatched huts and the beginning of a garden, made with tools provided by the Port Sorell lime burners; they found, too, among the natives gathered in a friendly and acquisitive mood nearby, the huge figure of a strange white man. Covered with a wrap of kangaroo skins, his upright and massive frame had appeared in the camp a few days before Wedge's arrival; he was a man of about fifty-five, slow-witted, slow-spoken even when at last he found the English words he had not uttered aloud for thirty-two years. Gradually, Wedge learnt something of William Buckley's story;² it went back to a Cheshire village at the end of the century, and a powerful young man, a bricklayer by trade, who had left the village to join the King's Own and gone to fight in Holland under the Duke of York; later, convicted of receiving stolen goods—some say of mutiny—he was sentenced to transportation for life. He was carried across the world with three hundred other prisoners, not to Port Jackson but to that sandy cove on the southern shore of Port Phillip Bay, the place chosen for the new penal settlement in anticipation of action by the French. There he had been made a servant to Colonel Collins, the Commandant; though Buckley did not know it, his master found the place as desolate and disagreeable as he did himself. Ignorant of Collins's almost immediate decision to abandon the settlement and remove to Van Diemen's Land, a number of prisoners deserted the camp, intending, it was said, to find their way

¹ Bonwick, *op. cit.*, p. 344.

² *Ibid.*, ch. X.

round the coast to Port Jackson where there was plenty of company of their own kind. Some were pursued and caught at a distance of sixty miles and, brought back to camp, received a hundred lashes each; others came back of their own accord, their courage broken after only a few days in the bush and their condition so pitiable that it was considered punishment enough. But, as a warning to others, it was not enough: not many days later another party absconded, and Buckley was one of these. Collins was unable to account for the desertions other than by attributing them to 'the restless disposition of man'. After seventeen days one struggled back and talked of the Blue Mountains and Sydney as the party's goal. Pursuit of 'the infatuated wretches' was now useless; their madness, said Collins, 'will be made manifest to themselves when they shall feel too late that they have wrought their own ruin'. When the transport *Ocean* carried the last of the establishment out of the bay seven absconders were still missing and were left, as Collins said, to perish in the woods.¹ Of these seven, six must have died from starvation, the madness of loneliness, or native spears; the seventh was the man who now talked haltingly with Wedge. He would not say, then or later, what had happened to his mates. Alone, and taking he could not tell how long, he had journeyed round the full circle of the great bay and along the ocean coast beyond, moving, had he but known, farther and farther from Sydney, Mecca of his muddled dreams: only a slow mind could have survived those solitary and resultless days. At last he turned back, meaning to return to the camp. Before death could take him, he fell in with a tribe of natives; impressed with his stature and the mystery of his arrival on their Earth, they adopted him and he wandered with them for thirty-two years, his movements governed, as theirs were, by the supply of water and shellfish, roots, lizards, kangaroo, and smaller game. Then came the day when, near Indented Head, his native friends brought him news that white men were camped close by. Silent, trembling, he appeared at the fringe of the camp, where his vast form, draped in kangaroo skins and carrying weapons, was an apparition as inexplicable to Batman's party as to his native rescuers years before.

¹ Colonel David Collins, *General Standing Orders at Port Phillip and Risdon Cove*, 1803-4 (MS., M.L.). See also *Clyde Co. II*, pp. 436-7.

I wish [wrote Governor Bourke to Arthur] that someone of Mr. Batman's party would obtain from Buckley the history of his adventures and give it to the Public. If Buckley is of the least observation or talent it could not fail to be interesting.¹

But for Buckley his life with the natives had held nothing memorable; he had lived it, that was all: nor had he any but blurred recollections of the years that went before. One thing, however, he remembered and thought of with fear—he was a convict, a 'lifer', and absconder: what would be done to him if he left his native friends and returned to a community of whites? Because of this fear, his first accounts of himself and how he came to be at Port Phillip were fabrications in which he figured as a free man and the heroic survivor of disaster at sea; but when Wedge arrived Buckley told him the truth. Wedge at once offered to intercede for him; he drew up a petition in Buckley's name, praying the Lieutenant Governor of Van Diemen's Land for the indulgence of a free pardon, and sent it back by the *Rebecca* together with a letter from himself to the Colonial Secretary recommending the petition on the grounds that in Batman's absence Buckley had saved the Indented Head party from attack by the natives and offered now to act in the future as the go-between in the affairs of whites and blacks. Wedge ventured to 'respectfully suggest' that the pardon should be granted at once and sent by the next vessel dispatched to Port Phillip. Wedge's representations, supported in Hobart Town by John Batman, were successful; Arthur, though 'doubtful how far he is authorized to grant a free pardon to William Buckley, as he is not within the jurisdiction of his Government', nevertheless 'acquiesced in the preparation of the usual instrument, in the hope that, from considerations of policy, the indulgence will be acceded to by His Majesty's Government'. The vessel that brought news of Arthur's acquiescence and the 'instrument' was the cutter *Mary Ann*, with Frank Henty on board. When Buckley was told that his friends had been successful he was, said Wedge, 'most deeply affected, and nothing could exceed the joy he evinced at once more feeling himself a free man, received again within the pale of civilized society': his speechless agitation was something Wedge would never forget. But a return to civilized society was

¹ *Arthur Papers*, vol. viii, Letter 47, 18.9.35 (MS., M.L.).

not after all to bring Buckley lasting content. Befriended and protected though he was, first by the members of the Port Phillip Association and later by the Government, the demands of the new life were too much for him and he proved unequal to the difficult and unpopular position of buffer between blacks and whites. Soon, he wished himself back in the irresponsible existence he had led with his nomad friends. After a while he was removed to a humbler post in Hobart Town; there he married, and there he learned—or learned again—to drink; but, drunk or sober, he never could be brought to speak of his life with the Port Phillip blacks: that unique experience had furnished him with nothing to say. Poor giant, with the low forehead and the huge limbs, he is a legendary figure in the Australian story and, silent though he himself was, has added a phrase to the common tongue: when a man has no hope of escaping from a predicament, we say that he has not got Buckley's chance.

The *Mary Ann* had arrived at Indented Head on 11 September and she did not get away finally from Port Phillip for three weeks. Thus her passenger, Frank Henty, spent a week or two at the encampment below the Yarra Falls and, through missing the *Lavinia*, saw the very start of Melbourne, the first steps by two rival parties whose respective shares in the foundation of Victoria's capital are disputed by partisans of each even today.

When the *Mary Ann* came in, Wedge had just returned from viewing the territory claimed by the Association, first walking with Buckley over the grassy plains of the Geelong peninsula and finding and naming the Barwurne (Barwon) River; next, still on foot, taking one of the white servants, two New South Wales natives and two local blacks and leaving Buckley at the camp, he had examined the country to a point six miles up the large river discovered by Grimes. Wedge now named it Yarrow Yarrow, mistakenly thinking that was its native name. It was here, where the river dropped over falls into a wide basin, that John Batman had chosen the place for a village. And here Wedge had been surprised to find another party encamped on the bank, their goods just unloaded from a vessel moored in deep water alongside. The men were a group got together by John Pascoe Fawcner, a well known publican and journalist of Launceston, and the vessel was the *Enterprise*; she had sailed from

Launceston the day after the *Rebecca* had left there with the Henry Batmans and Wedge. Advertised as laid on for New Holland, the destination of the *Enterprize* was primarily Westernport; her party—five Launceston citizens and their servants—after a brief and disapproving examination of Westernport had proceeded to Port Phillip and pursued a leisurely progress up the eastern shore of the bay, looking for sheep-country as they went. Fawkner himself was not with them, being prostrated by sea-sickness at the outset; he was put off at George Town with a horse on which to return to Launceston and did not follow to Port Phillip for some months. But it was on his advice that the party looked for suitable land on the bay's eastern shore. He had been there before. Like Buckley, his father was one of the convict colony of 1803; Mrs. Fawkner had been allowed to accompany her husband, and Betsy the daughter and Johnny the eleven year old son had come too. Through his troubled youth in Van Diemen's Land, and in his still troubled and troublesome but influential manhood, Fawkner had evidently kept a feeling for the coastal country he had learnt to know as a boy during those few months of 1803-4. From the camp in the scrub his eye must often have followed the narrow line of beach running eastwards to the high white cliff and beyond it, past a belt of dusky banksias, to the steep wooded shoulder of the hill named Arthur's Seat. There was a small fresh stream at the base of that hill, he knew; there might be good water and better country farther on, where the coast curved about the feet of two low hills before fading out of view to the north. And so, thirty two years later, his schooner *Enterprize* moved along the eastern shore from the Heads to the river at the bay's upper end, landing her party daily to explore; but until they reached the river well-watered country was not found. Pulling in their whale boat some six miles up this stream they came to the falls and the end of the tidal water; between the trees the grassy banks were strewn with spring flowers and the air was full of wattle blossom scent. Here was both beauty and convenience; obviously it was the place to remain. Joyfully they brought the *Enterprize* up the river. They cut away the overhanging branches to let the schooner lie close alongside, bridged the gap with a plank and landed their horses and kangaroo dogs, their goods and the rest of the party, including one woman, Mary Gilbert, wife of the

blacksmith and servant-of-all-work to the camp. Two days later, when hut building had begun and the scene had already lost the fine edge of perfection, Wedge appeared.

Amicably enough, Wedge warned the party that they were trespassers on the Association's very ground—this was the spot that Batman had chosen for the town, here was the reserve for the public common, and so on. Wedge recorded in his notebook that he

communicated verbally to these gentlemen that they were within the limits of the land purchased by Mr. Batman from the natives; in reply to which they stated their determination to hold possession.

Next morning he waited on the leader, Captain John Lancy, Master Mariner, 'and in a conversation with that gentleman, pointed out the impropriety of interference with our land, and the unpleasant consequences that would result of their persisting in doing so'. Good manners seem to have ruled the opening skirmishes: Wedge's notes went on:

I took breakfast with them, and afterwards spoke to the rest of the gentlemen to the same effect. Before leaving I informed them by writing that they were within the limits of our land, and gave them a description of the boundaries.

The *Enterprize* was about to leave the basin and would sail from the river's mouth for Launceston with the first fair wind. Wedge was offered a passage, but he was not ready to leave Port Phillip yet. However, he accepted Captain Lancy's offer to convey letters and also received a small supply of flour before leaving on his walk back to Indented Head. He and his men were six days on the way, exploring as they went; by the fifth their food was finished and they had to live on roots and a chance-shot bird. Two days after they reached the encampment, the *Mary Ann* arrived, with Frank Henty and Buckley's pardon on board. As soon as possible Wedge broke camp and the whole party embarked in her for the mouth of the Yarra Yarra, the natives of the locality weeping bitterly at parting with Buckley, their friend of numberless moons. Arrived at the falls, they found the 'intruders' ploughing and planting and building: Melbourne was begun. Wedge left the party to establish itself and set off down the river to embark in the *Mary Ann* for Launceston via Portland Bay.

Frank, waiting for his passage, had been a spectator of the meeting at the Yarra Falls. The scene must have held special interest for him, since he was a squatter himself. Doubtless in his own mind he compared the advantages of Batman's country and the Hentys' own: Port Phillip had the large river and the open plains but Portland Bay had the whales. But if he wrote about it to his father the letter and his impressions are lost. Of his own small share in those historic doings of September 1835, we know only that, as he was to tell his children, he helped Henry Batman put up his tent.

As well as to Batman and Fawkner the affair on the Yarra was a matter of moment to Thomas Henty, for it was likely to make his position at Portland Bay even more precarious than it was. At this time Bourke's proclamation was on its way from Sydney to Hobart Town, with the announcement that was to nullify equally the Batman boundaries and the intentions of the Fawkner party to make their own bargain with other native tribes. Bourke was a staunch upholder of the rights of the Crown, even when unable to agree with the policy the Crown's ministers might dictate. In the matter of dispersion of population his personal views and those of the Colonial Office were not the same: 'my arguments', he told Arthur, 'which favour dispersion where sheep are concerned, have usually been resisted in Downing Street'.¹ While carrying out strictly, as in duty bound, the British Government's declared policy of opposition to the spread of settlement, he had already made the first move to change that policy and gain permission for the southerly extension of settlement in New South Wales. Unsuccessful in 1834 in connexion with Twofold Bay, he reopened the subject in 1835 after learning of Batman's action at Port Phillip Bay; in October, in a despatch to the Secretary of State² he sought approval of what he pointed out was the natural, inevitable, and in fact desirable dispersion of colonists and their flocks and herds. Prohibited or not, he said, dispersion would go on, and it was 'not to be disguised' that the Government was unable to prevent it. That being so, how, he asked, might his own government turn to the best advantage of the colony a state of things it could not effectively forbid? It might, he suggested,

¹ *Arthur Papers*, vol. viii, Letter 54, 13.5.36.

² Bourke to Glenelg, *I H.R.A.*, vol. xviii, pp. 153-8.

be found practicable, by means of the sale of land, in situations peculiarly advantageous, however distant from other locations, to procure the means of diminishing the evils of dispersion; and by establishing townships and ports, and facilitating the intercourse between the remote and [the] more settled districts of this vast territory, to provide, though but imperfectly, centres of civilization, and government, and thus gradually to extend the power of order and social union to the most distant part of the wilderness.

Such are the considerations which rendered me unwilling to oppose the settlement of Twofold Bay. The same considerations induce me to believe that it will be more desirable to impose reasonable conditions upon Mr. Batman and his associates than to insist upon their abandoning their undertaking. . . .

There followed a general outline of a plan for settlement; the magistracy and a constabulary force were mentioned, but with no more emphasis than other departments, amongst which education had an important place; unlike Arthur's when contemplating a new colony Bourke's mind did not run chiefly on the prevention and punishment of crime. Nor was he deterred from acting on behalf of Port Phillip by the fact he mentioned, that the benefits of its development would fall chiefly to Van Diemen's Land and not to New South Wales.

Bourke's first attempt to liberalize the policy of the Home Government had been rebuffed by Lord Aberdeen; his second found in Lord Glenelg, Aberdeen's successor at the Colonial Office, a more malleable man. Glenelg saw that 'the spirit of adventure and speculation' could not be repressed by law; he expressed the view that the unauthorized settlers at Twofold Bay and Port Phillip Bay probably deserved not discouragement but recommendation. Thanks to these three men—to the enterprise of Batman, the colonist; to the wisdom of Bourke, the colonial governor; and to the pliability of Glenelg, the Downing Street official—His Majesty's Government yielded to 'unforeseen exigency'; yielded, moreover, with remarkable speed: for permission for the settlement of Port Phillip was granted less than twelve months after the day that John Batman first landed at Indented Head.¹

¹ Glenelg's instructions to Bourke to open the country were written on 13 Apr. 1836 and acknowledged by Bourke on 15 Sept. (*I H.R.A.*, vol. xviii, pp. 379–81 and 540).

THE MOST ENTERPRISING FAMILY

IN 1835 it was not only the banks of the Yarra Yarra that were embroidered by spring. In Launceston, when James and his party landed from the *Ann* in October, the weather was beautiful, the gardens were nosegays, the hawthorns bloomed in the wide Esk valleys, and the country was green. Next autumn the Strathmore mill would be busy and ships at the Launceston wharves would be loaded with wheat for New South Wales. Business was buoyant when Charles welcomed James back to the Henty office where he had carried on, with John's assistance, for eighteen months.

The *Ann* had arrived on Monday, 19 October. On Wednesday, 11 November, Charles Henty and Susan Boniface, eldest daughter of the late Charles Boniface of Kinfield, Sussex, were married in Launceston by special licence at St. John's, the parish church. Dr. W. H. Browne officiated and the witnesses were Charles's father and mother, his brother James, and sister Jane; in the register both bride and bridegroom are described as *free*. The pleasant and accomplished Susan was marrying a lively active young man who enjoyed his work and succeeded in it. In Sussex the family bank had trained him and sent him to its Arundel branch—that stupid concern, James had called it. Stupid or not, in Launceston it had led in 1834 to that request to Charles already told of, to tidy up the tangled affairs of the Cornwall Bank and to his subsequent appointment as managing director of the new Bank of Australasia.¹ The Old Cornwall Bank had been founded by W. Effingham Lawrence of Launceston and Formosa, with James Cox of Clarendon; in 1835 two of the retiring directors were replaced by Sam Bryan of Strathmore and Thomas Henty—still with no estate after his name, which must have made him sad. In March of that year, after he had got the bank's books into order,

¹ For the services of Charles and James Henty to the Cornwall Bank and the Launceston branch of the Bank of Australasia, see *Clyde Co. II*, note on V.D.L.'s Banks of 1838, pp. 439-41.

Charles was defendant in a case brought by the Crown against the bank's cashier, in reality against the previous cashier, now dead. The jury brought in a verdict for Charles; a short letter from him published in the *Cornwall Chronicle* together with a polite addition by the editor made it plain that Charles had not been connected with the bank at the time in question.¹ Next month, when the first Launceston Bank for Savings opened for business at the Tamar Bank in Brisbane Street, Charles was made one of its seven directors. In July the Cornwall's affairs seemed to have regained health, for the directors declared a half-yearly dividend of 15 per cent. In London, James had conferred with the Bank of Australasia's Court of Directors and brought back with him a proposal for an agreement to be submitted to the proprietors of the Cornwall Bank. As a result the Cornwall in its original form was wound up and the Australasia began business on New Year's Day, 1836;² James was one of the directors with, amongst others, W. E. Lawrence and the merchant and shipowner, Henry Reed. Also, at this time the Cornwall Bank and the South Australian Banking Company entered into a co-operative arrangement, with Charles as the Launceston managing director of the new establishment. Altogether, Charles was a busy man.

Thomas had two loves—farming, and his family: his letters stray from one absorbing subject to the other, interweaving expressions of pride in his sons and of concern for their future with gossip about types of cattle, the price of sheep, the progeny of his blood horses, reverting most often to his own merinos and experiments to improve their wool. The fascinating problems of breeding for fine and finer wool remained a bond between him and John Street. 'I sent you a Teg Ram', Thomas told his friend,

not quite thirteen months old, which I hope will arrive safe. I think it may be a useful cross—I wish to hear your *candid opinion* of him, and state how he stands with yours in length and quality of wool, it is likely yours are finer, but I should think not so long in the staple—I believe I told you I was told by a Yorkshire man in Dec^r last that Wool then growing upon my Sheep, was worth in Yorkshire 3/6 per lb. Thus if I can grow a fleece of 6 lbs. it may again be

¹ *Corn. Chron.* 28.3.35, 4.4.35, and 18.4.35.

² *Ibid.* 21.11.35 and 5.12.35.

called the Golden Fleece. I can make 5 and 6 Guineas each for my Rams in this Colony—I have sold already of Tegs and if we get our land I do not think I shall have any more to spare this season.

‘Our Land’ at Portland Bay and the prospect of getting a title to it were much in his mind: he confided to Street that

I have suffered the opinion of those who have taken a Bird’s Eye view of it, and who say there is only about 1500 Acres good land, to circulate—I *know better*—and I believe 200,000 Acres of good land may be found not a very long way from the bay. The whaling was from the last Account (by my son Francis) going on *prosperously*, we have a third of it—I hope the fishing will stock my new Country.

If he got the good news that he expected from James he would again go up . . . and take a more expansive view of it. . . . There is a fine field open . . . for Emigrants and if we get our land there I am quite certain I shall soon be surrounded by others. . . . Many persons here, are ready to purchase *there*, and lots of persons are gone, or going to Westernport, Port Phillip etc. I tell you this confidentially, at present I do not *say all this to anyone* here.¹

This was written in August 1835, less than three weeks after the departure of the Wedge party for Indented Head and the Fawkner party for Westernport: sign that what Arthur was to call ‘the rage for Port Phillip’ had already begun.

Cattle shows had been pleasurable and important events in Thomas’s English life; in Launceston he found on arrival that there was nothing of the kind. As appears from the *Launceston Advertiser*, he took an active part in setting this right, taking the chair at the meeting of ‘Landholders and others’ that founded the Cornwall Agricultural Society on 2 October 1833. A year later the society was ready to hold its first annual show. This took place in the paddock at the back of the Launceston Hotel

¹ *Henty Papers, M.L.*, 8.8.35. Soon, so many people went across the strait that the traffic created a problem for the customs officers at Hobart Town: on 30.6.36 Arthur informed the Colonial Office that ‘the Collector and Controller of Customs at this Port [Hobart] have represented their opinion that the Customs officers at Launceston are acting illegally in clearing vessels for Port Phillip, that place not being a Port within the meaning of the Laws and Regulations relating to the Customs’. The V.D.L. Attorney-General supported the Launceston officers (of whom a nephew of Arthur’s was one), holding that though ‘Port Phillip is not a *Port* within the strict legal sense’ the Legislature of New South Wales ‘contemplated clearance not merely to *Ports* but *Places*’ (*Hobart Arch.*). In vain Hobart’s attempt to control the tide: the traffic increased.

on 2 December 1834; James was in England, Edward at Portland Bay and just setting out on his first excursion into the bush, but one imagines that all other Hentys, including Mrs. Thomas and Mrs. Sam Bryan, foregathered in the paddock to meet their acquaintance and to appraise the stock. The crowd was the largest ever seen in Launceston; most of the gentlemen of the town were present and it was noticeable that the merchants of the community were just as much interested in the scene as the country proprietors. The *Advertiser*, pointing to the interdependence of the two groups, considered that

of all the schemes set on foot having professedly a public object in view, we know of none so entirely unobjectionable as the Cornwall Agricultural Society. The originators of it have earned the esteem of the Colony.

Thomas was a judge of the horse stock and a successful exhibitor of sheep, winning the 2nd class premium for a pen of merino rams shown in their teg fleeces and particularly admired for the length of staple combined with the fine quality of their wool. The first class premium went to a pen of Saxon rams shown by Mr. James Aitken, soon to be one of the first settlers of Port Phillip.

It is not surprising that Thomas was asked to be a judge of the horses exhibited; he had lived his life within sight and sound of the Petworth stables and was intimate with the perfections and triumphs of Egremont's stud. Also, he had seen—perhaps shared in—the very beginning of Goodwood, when in the opening of the century the young militia officers, waiting through the frustrated months for an enemy that did not come, relieved the tedium by getting up a race meeting on the Downs. Despite the times, money had been collected for sweepstakes and the Duke of Richmond, grandfather to the man now supporting the Hentys' claims, lent his Goodwood estate. Times grew harder still, but the meetings continued through the years until, by the time Thomas dispatched the *Caroline*, Goodwood had become one of the most important annual events of the English turf.¹ Neighbour to such standards of horseflesh, no wonder Thomas was himself devoted to pure-bred stock and, when emigrating, looked to fine horses as well as fine wool to make the

¹ *Horse Racing*, pp. 259–60.

family fortune overseas. He must have gone to his first Launceston race meeting with a sense of enjoyment and a critical eye. He did not remain a mere spectator for long; a few months after his arrival he advertised the services of Young Wanderer and offered a purse of thirty sovereigns to be run for over the Launceston course by Wanderer's produce when two years old. At the October meeting in 1834 he was appointed a steward with Messrs. Hardwicke, John Cox, and J. C. Underwood, the first of many occasions.

Before Thomas's letter to Street, written on Boxing Day, 1835, James had returned from England and Charles was married; at present both were doing as well as Thomas could wish. Stephen, Thomas reported, was exploring with Governor Stirling at Doubtful Island Bay where there were prospects of good land and whaling.¹ Edward and Frank, he said, seemed satisfied at Portland Bay, where grass was abundant and where Thomas hoped to go with James and Sam Bryan before the summer was over to explore further into the country: 'if I go up to Portland Bay', he warned Street, 'it will prevent my taking my trip for this year to your place—I hope however we shall meet again'.

I trust all will yet be well with my industrious family; they are united, and we are dubbed the most enterprising family in the Colony.—So much of Self & Co. I fear you will think me an Egotist in saying so much of me and mine—It is however I believe a common case for people to speak of that, which is nearest to their heart.

He felt there was need to count his blessings; 'You see, my good fellow', he said, in a somewhat anxious aside, 'I have been tossed about like a Shuttle Cock'.

James brings me much news. Many of my old friends stick to me like Leach's, particularly Duke of Richmond and Lord Surry. He was shooting with your brother Henry. The family were all well, and the Miss Streets were, *as they were*. The Manufacturers were in full force, the Agricultural Interest in a wretched state—Wheat at about £10 the load. As farmers, you and I can have no regrets in

¹ Before this excursion Stephen had received (30.9.35) the Governor's conditional permission for the exchange of the Hentys' Leschenault grant for one at Doubtful Island Bay if Stephen should wish it after examining the area. Stephen was disappointed in it and the plan was not pursued (F. I. Bray, *W.A. Hist. Soc. Jour.*, vol. i, pt. vii).

leaving England—I only wish I had come out when you did, and gained grants for my family—However, I must now do the best I can. My blood horses are now increased to nine. What would a stallion of *the best blood* sell for, 3 years old in your Colony? Poor old Lord Egremont was nearly worn out, when James left.¹

Egremont was indeed near his death; lovable old Egremont, who had helped the poor and moreover helped without disapproval's chilling frown; who honoured the artist by setting him unconditionally free; whose pleasure it had been to excel in a sport, then honourably conducted, that tested the skill and strength of both animal and man and quickened the blood of the onlooker, whether farm-labourer or lord: this survivor of the eighteenth century whose motto was 'Live and Let Live' had brought zest and colour to the lives of thousands, and of these Thomas Henty with his love of horseflesh was one.

So far, the Hentys' whaling enterprise was still a matter of working with others. Whaling was at its peak and a system of sharing was evidently profitable enough, but after James returned from England with complete gear Edward, Stephen, and Charles in partnership started at the Bay independently of Sinclair or anyone else. In the West, where Stephen was looking into the possibilities at Doubtful Island Bay, James had been interested in whales in the first days after landing but had felt that everyone, including himself, was too ignorant of the art to make such a venture prudent. Whales there were plentiful and pursued by increasing numbers of ships, chiefly American, but at the time of Thomas's letter no company had been formed at the Swan. A few months later the *Perth Gazette* reported that a whaling ship, the property of the Hentys, had been fitted out from Launceston and was believed to be 'pursuing this profitable enterprise' in Shark's Bay, away to the north; while Swan River neglected its own rich resources the *Gazette* felt that action by 'the sister colonies' was to be expected and for the time at least there was room for all. Up to 1837, when two rival Fremantle companies came into being, any Swan River resident wishing to invest in whaling had to do it via Van Diemen's Land. 'Whaling', wrote Mary Bussell to England from Augusta on the same day that Thomas was writing from Launceston to John Street,

¹ MS., M.L.

whaling is now almost as great a mania as sheep. We are rather anxious to venture so hope to succeed in having our money placed in the Van Diemen's Bank where not the least advantage is that they give 10 per cent instead of three. The Hentys you know the name have realized each of them one thousand pounds this year in their whaling speculation is not this tempting a station is much talked of for Doubtful Island Bay which the Governor and party have just been down to explore beyond King George's Sound.

The Hentys' profits named by Mary had probably grown as the gossip was carried from Launceston to Fremantle and back to the Vasse and Augusta; whatever their true figure they must have been the result of shared enterprise at Portland Bay. There, 'the boys have done wonders', Thomas told William early next year, 'although the Expenses for the first year may frighten you, amounting to £13,700. Yet, if the prices keep up it will be a little fortune to them.' Not only in whaling were prospects bright: the drought in New South Wales had caused an immense rise in the price not merely of corn but of cattle and sheep and Thomas told William he had 'been getting rich without knowing it'. James, he went on,

has lately returned from a visit to the boys at Portland Bay where he was a fortnight. He appears quite surprised at what the Boys have already done there and delighted with the Country. Edward thinks the climate the finest in the world, though much rain in the winter. This accounts for the abundance of Grass—so luxuriant is it, that his sheep are *too fat* for stock and the Bullocks for working, although they are yarded every night. He has not lost a Sheep by either Native Dogs, or anything else. I hope we may *long possess it*. Edward has now a flock of nearly 1000 sheep, and we have 500 more bought, to send up the first opportunity. . . . I am still in hopes we may get Camfield in at Portland Bay. He was doing nothing at the Swan till Stephen lent him on Mortgage £250—which he will probably repay with Money his Father has sent him. . . . Swan River they say *improves a little*.

William must have been expressing fear that 'the Boys' were over-reaching themselves; Thomas told him he

need not be afraid of Stephen or Frank, the former is popular everywhere, and a smart courageous good fellow. The Infant Frank has a foot rather exceeding *twelve inches in length* and stands 6 feet 2 inches in high. Bryan calls him a very right-minded proper young

Man. . . . I expect Stephen here by the next Ship bringing a *Wife* with him. I hear a most favorable account of her good sense.

Stephen was not only married: he had made up his mind to join his brothers at Portland Bay. To this end he had bought the 69 ton schooner *Sally Ann*. The schooner had arrived from the Cape in April 1835, navigated by her owner, Captain Howe, and had gone on to Sydney; in September she was back again and was hired by the Government for the next six months to make monthly trips to the Vasse, Augusta, and the Sound. Private individuals, said the *Gazette*,

will be able to send goods at an established rate, and travel themselves for a small sum, arranging with the Captain about provisions. As far as possible the *Sally Ann* will start for King George's Sound and Augusta 1st of every month.

Stephen's purchase of her before the six months were up left the distant settlers in doubt of a continued regular contact with headquarters. In February 1836 Fanny Bussell wrote from the Vasse that the *Sally Ann* was expected in from the Sound and might make one more visit this season;

Mr. Henty has purchased her of Mr. Howe and I believe he will also call once at all the ports but this is uncertain. . . . We are becoming quite mercantile, Mr. Howe on his last visit took up 62 lbs. of our Cattle Chosen butter which he immediately sold for 2/6 per lb. . . .

Though Augusta was now, as John Bussell said, 'on the eve of dissolution' there were still fourteen people there, amongst these Captain and Mrs. Molloy and their children: lonely Augusta and the mercantile Vasse were going to miss the comfort of the periodical visits of the schooner *Sally Ann*.

In January and throughout February the *Gazette* published the statutory notices by Mr. S. G. Henty that he was about to leave the colony, and also paragraphs referring to a number of his cattle lost in the bush; some of these animals had probably strayed from his grant on the Canning, others, thirty or forty working bullocks, had been lost from the hour of their landing from the *Caroline* at Mangles Bay in 1829. No doubt his forthcoming marriage made Stephen anxious to recover some of his lost capital. His bride was Miss Jane Pace, second daughter of Captain Walter Pace, formerly of the East India Company's fleet, later commander of the *Medina* bringing emigrants to the

Swan in 1830, and now captain of the ship *Monkey* trading between Fremantle and Mauritius, Batavia and elsewhere. His first visit to the Swan had inclined him to emigrate himself, since employment by the company was at an end; he decided to go out for a second view. With Mr. Phillip Dod, an Elder Brother of Trinity House, he chartered the ship *Ann* and with passengers and a speculative cargo sailed for Fremantle towards the end of 1831, leaving Mrs. Pace and his family in Yorkshire until a decision as to Swan River should be made. Captain Pace, being less concerned with agriculture than with the opportunities for a ship-master trading to the east, decided the prospects were good. He built a nice stone house—a rarity in Fremantle—and wrote home that he would shortly return to England to fetch his wife and family. But Mrs. Pace was a woman of much initiative, as the colony was to learn; deciding that she could manage the move without troubling her husband to cross the world, she sailed with a son and two young daughters towards the end of 1833. Their vessel was the barque *Quebec Trader*, Captain Bellamy, R.N. On leaving England she sailed straight into a storm that wrecked many ships in the Channel and put her on the rocks at Fowey on the Cornish coast. They were delayed more than a month for repairs. The waste of time and the cost of replacing outfits damaged by seawater were a matter of much concern to Mrs. Pace, anxious to rejoin her husband and travelling steerage to save expense, but by Jane, aged sixteen, the episode was much enjoyed. After an interlude with friends at the Cape of Good Hope, head winds and storms delayed them again; at last, ‘by God’s Providence’, they arrived in Gage’s Roads on 19 April, to find that no word of their coming had reached Captain Pace. The surprise might have been costly but fortunately he had not left for England and his ship, the *Monkey*, was in harbour at the time. Jane Pace was to remember always that arrival in the Roads, with the settlers in boatloads, hungry for news, calling inquiries up the ship’s sides—‘How are you? How did you leave the King and the Royal Family?’ A young man among the settlers, not so clamorous as the rest, was a Mr. Stephen Henty to whom Mrs. Pace had brought letters of introduction in case her husband had left the colony.¹

¹ From Mrs. Stephen Henty’s reminiscences, dictated in her old age, a privately printed booklet among *Henty Family Papers*

Two years later, on 14 April 1836, Stephen and Jane were married at Fremantle: the Rev. J. B. Wittenoom officiated, as with James and Charlotte, and perhaps in his own house as there was still no church. Captain Pace was on a voyage to Java and the Governor gave the bride away. As the *Gazette* reported, the marriage

gave occasion for a day of general rejoicing at Fremantle on Thursday last; the liberality of S. G. Henty, Esq., was extended to all classes of the neighborhood—not forgetting the prisoners at the jail. The ceremony took place at twelve o'clock, in the presence of His Excellency and Lady Stirling and a numerous party of friends. The happy couple immediately afterwards proceeded to Burswood, the residence of J. Camfield, Esq. on the Middle Swan.

Stephen and Jane were to sail from Fremantle for Launceston on 21 May in the *Sally Ann*, with Captain Howe navigating, and with a number of passengers, calling en route at the Vasse, Augusta, the Sound, and Portland Bay: severe westerlies, however, delayed their departure for at least some days. Unless Stephen changed his plans, the Vasse and Augusta now met Stephen's bride and saw the *Sally Ann* and Captain Howe for the last time. The schooner spent a week at the Sound, where Sir Richard Spencer gave a 'ball' in the Stephen Hentys' honour and where a serious accident occurred, for coming off to the *Sally Ann* one night Captain Howe fell from the whale-boat and was drowned. From here Stephen took charge of the schooner himself. He had never been to Portland Bay; his intention evidently was to call there to introduce Jane and Edward and Frank and to take a first look at their future home. According to his wife, Stephen was an inexperienced navigator who sailed by dead reckoning alone: he found himself well past Portland and looking for the first time, and without a chart, at the perilous entrance to Port Phillip Bay. Turning about, he made for Van Diemen's Land and fetched up safe and sound at Launceston on the 5th of July, where a warm welcome from her new family awaited Stephen's eighteen year old bride.

And John? In Thomas's family chronicles—in his discursive chat concerning whales, sheep, cattle, horses, mercantile ventures and now squatting—there is not one word of John. He remains the shadow, the question mark, the faint bruise of anxiety on his mother's heart. He had been in Launceston since

the *Thistle* brought him back from the West early in 1833 and latterly there had been talk of his joining Edward and Frank at the Bay when his parents moved from Cormiston to Red Hill—he was not sure if he wanted to go or not. Mrs. Henty confided her worry to Edward and asked his help in a letter written on 19 March 1836:

John seems *now* to depend on going to Portland Bay when we leave Cormiston, but how it will be altogether I don't know, three brothers is almost too many to live in one House, I shall be afraid you won't agree. John has been a very affectionate and dutiful son ever since he has been with us, and exceedingly industrious but he is rather too fond of drink from an infant he was always thirsty and naturally rather inwardly weak which made him feel that good drink did him more good than water and I am afraid it has grown upon him, but perhaps my dear Edward you will be able to correct that if you could it would be a great happiness to me, and I am sure a *blessing* to him—he really works hard, something like you and being rather inwardly weak he requires something a little nourishing to drink, twice he has come from cattle hunting quite ill from fatigue, and [illegible] bad, and I have been obliged to give him Quinine, you of course keep the Key of the Wine and Porter, both of which I hope you will always have as I know you work hard.

John, and Stephen and Jane too, went to live at Portland Bay later in the year, but before then something happened that changed the prospects of the whole family and gave to each of the Henty brothers a home of his own.

BRYAN IMBROGLIO

IT was in February 1836, after a mild and showery summer, that James paid his first visit to Portland Bay. The brothers rode about, examining Bridgewater to the west of the bay, where the first of their stations was established, and the country eastwards, inland from the First and Second Rivers, that had so delighted Edward the year before: 'James much pleased', Edward notes in the journal. The *Thistle* returned for James on the 11th of March, bringing 300 sheep, and left on the 14th with oil, whalebone, and the Hentys' first exported vegetables—12 cwt. of potatoes, 2 bags of turnips, a basket of onions, carrots, and cucumbers: a clear demonstration to their mother that pickles were no longer required.

Pleased as James certainly was, it is doubtful whether he was now satisfied to the full. For some time he had planned a business trip to Sydney and a visit to Street at Bathurst if time allowed; writing to Street in April he said that he expected to be 'called up' to see Governor Bourke. No doubt this was in relation to Bourke's proclamation and to squatting at the Bay, part of Bourke's domain. It is extremely doubtful whether Bourke had at this time any knowledge of the Hentys at the Bay, but in any case it is unlikely that he would have wished to uproot them; through the proclamation, Batman and such as he had been warned that they held no title, and that, as far as Bourke was concerned, sufficed: for his own part, as he told Arthur, he 'would not take any steps for calling [Batman] in'.¹ Whether Bourke knew of the Henty venture or not, no official summons came to James and to his great disappointment an unavoidable engagement in Launceston postponed for the present all hope of a voluntary visit to Sydney. Another letter to Street² explained that

a Female Emigrant Ship the 'Amelia Thompson' is expected to arrive here about the 1st September and as her *Cargo* is consigned to

¹ *Arthur Papers*, vol. viii, Letter 47, 18.9.35.

² Henty to Street, 10.8.36 (*M.L.*).

me I am under the necessity of being on the spot in order to receive them and organize a Ladies Committee for the purpose of protecting them after their arrival.

James said he had fully made up his mind that sheep farming was 'the best trade going'; within the last twelve months the price of stock had risen a great deal. Ewes were selling for 35s. and 40s.; they had now 1,000 ewes at the Bay and nearly as many would go over from Launceston next summer: 'we find they do very well'. But evidently he wanted to possess a few thousand acres of good sheep country to which the title would be secure, and as to buying property in Van Diemen's Land—that was out of the question; 'it is hardly possible', he told Street,

to get any quantity of Land in this Colony at a modest price as the rich old settlers some or other of whom is sure to adjoin are sure to bid over the heads of any new comer whose resources are generally inferior to those of his antagonist.

That being so, he was looking to located parts of New South Wales. Would it, he asked Street,

be too much trouble for you to give me your ideas on the subject whether Crown Land is to be had good for anything at the minimum price and at something like an available distance. Have you any Land in the Bathurst district suitable for this purpose and do you think if it were put up to Auction it would fetch more than the minimum price?

With this inquiry came another;

How does your Governor stand in the estimation of the respectable part of the Colonists—is he really an impartial good man or does his zeal for equality and fair play lead him into the opposite extreme of strong partiality for the Emancipists. I should judge this to be the case from the Papers.

This was not idle curiosity on James's part; he needed a true picture of the man who had succeeded the repressive and unpopular Darling in 1831 and who was the arbiter of concerns at Port Phillip and the Bay. Bourke was in favour of an unrestricted press and of trial by jury, an outlook that won him the support of Wentworth and of a part of Sydney's journalist world; but his adherence to the view that an emancipated convict was entitled to full civic rights brought him into conflict with two classes of

inhabitants—the faction of the old ‘exclusives’, with traditions dating from the days of Governor Macquarie, and the new, small but growing, class of free emigrants, the artisans and farm labourers who now were arriving and finding themselves in the labour market alongside the ticket-of-leave men and the ex-pirees. The *Australian* ardently supported the emancipists’ rights and therefore Governor Bourke; other papers violently expressed the opposite view. Familiarity with the vituperative, often scurrilous, newspapers of Van Diemen’s Land doubtless inclined James to distrust the colonial press: he knew that a governor, even a Governor Arthur, was sometimes right and felt that he could depend on Street to give him a fair view.

James’s letter returned at the end to that never-long-deserted topic, sheep: ‘Am I to get a Ram or two from you next season’, he asked, ‘I should like a good change of blood much’. And, talking of change of blood—‘We lose Col. Arthur next month, a Mr. Hume (not Joseph)¹ is said to succeed him. We certainly do want a change here.’

Mrs. Sam Bryan had written to Edward of the coming end to Arthur’s reign, and written less composedly than James. ‘I daresay’, she wrote,

you would be aware before now of the, to us, good news of the recall of Governor George Arthur. Wm. B. is the cause of it and is carrying everything before him at Head Quarters at the Colonial Office. We will have our day yet.²

Who was this so powerful Wm. B? He was a brother of Sam and had no doubt sent them the triumphant information himself. Like Sam, he was an early settler; his property, Glenore, was near the village of Carrick and was now let. He had been one of the magistrates of the north until November 1833, when as a result of violent conflict with the authorities his magistracy came to an end. His case had been the talk of Van Diemen’s Land at the time and since the arrival of recent despatches tongues had been wagging again.³

In marrying Samuel Bryan, Jane Henty had married affluence but not ease. Strathmore’s setting was serenity itself, but its air

¹ Leading reformer and radical M.P.

² 1.7.36 (*Henty Family Papers*).

³ The cases of Sam, William, and Robert Bryan can be followed from despatches and other papers in the *Hobart Arch.*, but only by a tortuous path. West devotes a chapter to William Bryan’s case (vol. i, pp. 165–74).

of peace was illusory; too often must it have been disturbed by the emotions of the master within. The landowner of the period who opposed himself to the arbitrary rulings of Governor Arthur found his plans thwarted, and was without redress, and Sam was not a subservient man. In the early years of his marriage his wrathful resentment of Arthur's treatment of himself, his brother William and their nephew Robert must have sounded in his wife's ears as constantly as the rumble of the mill. Brought up as one of only two women in a family of eight men, she had been well trained in the art of listening; one feels, however, that her listening was not likely to be of the passive eyes-on-needle-work sort. Whether in the beginning she tried to apply a douche of Henty common sense or added wifely fuel to the fire, it is plain that she soon shared the passionate longing of the Bryans for Arthur's recall.

Sam had not always been opposed to authority; for Arthur's predecessor, Governor Sorell, who had granted him the 2,200 acres of Strathmore, he cherished the highest regard. After Sorell's departure and the beginning of Arthur's campaign to end the bushranger terrorism, Bryan, with other gentlemen of the district, had earned the warm thanks of the commandant of the northern part of the Island for praiseworthy and important services rendered to the colony in helping to catch the gang of bushrangers headed by the notorious Brady: it was the appreciation of Arthur himself that the commandant conveyed for this material contribution to 'the happy termination of a system which has so long proved a serious evil, and disturbed the peace and welfare of the Inhabitants'. Arthur's favours, however, had not run parallel with his appreciation; Sam resented what he felt was unjust treatment by the Governor in the matter of servants assigned to Strathmore. The expense of fencing and draining the farm and erecting buildings, including the £3,000 mill, had, he claimed, been excessive because under Arthur he never was 'able to get a fair portion of assigned convicts, and those assigned were the worst and most useless, nor could he get mechanics on loan to help with the buildings'; therefore he had been compelled to employ a great deal of non-convict labour at high cost. Evidently, it was not only the bushrangers who had begun to feel the effects of Arthur's iron hand.¹

¹ Sam Bryan's memorial to the Secretary of State (*Hobart Arch.*).

Perhaps, indeed, it was the irksomeness of the Governor's arbitrary and efficient rule, combined with the favouritism shown towards settlers too wise to be provoked, that had turned Sam's thoughts to the new free settlement at the Swan. In 1830 he and his brother had chartered a ship, the *William*, and freighted her for the West; his disappointment with the country and return to Van Diemen's Land have already been told. He was away for a year; in his absence his brother applied on Sam's behalf for a further grant on the ground of large sums of money introduced to the colony and improvements made. In not very clear terms the application was refused; William was informed that owing to the 'very considerable' time of Sam's absence and because 'there is no vacant land adjoining his present location his application cannot be entertained until his return to Van Diemen's Land'. Accordingly an application was made by Sam himself in June 1831, after his return. To this no answer came. Arthur had just received the despatch altering the system of land disposal and public announcement of the new arrangement had been made; Sam, of course, was aware of the new system and probably hoped his application might be regarded as merely a repetition of the one made earlier on his behalf. Now, however, being out of favour, he was not likely to be numbered among those to benefit from Arthur's liberal interpretation of the rider to Goderich's despatch that in certain cases, notwithstanding the interdict, gave him a loophole for making grants. A further letter from Sam elicited the information that the properties he wanted, and that he had said he was willing to buy if they could not be granted, had been sold 'to others' and that Arthur regretted it was not in his power to comply with the request for an additional grant.

In 1835 Sam assembled his grievances in a memorial to the Colonial Office, asking that Arthur be directed to give him a due supply of convict servants and a secondary grant of land; this he was misguided enough to forward, not, as would have been proper, through the Governor himself but through William Bryan, then in England as the result of his own personal clash with Arthur. As Sam observed, he was at a loss to conceive why Arthur should have treated him as he did:

it could not be on the score of character as your Memorialist is unconscious of having committed any act derogatory to the feelings

of a Gentleman; nor yet could it be on that of education for your Memorialist took his degree of Batchelor of Arts in the University of Dublin. Your Memorialist has to regret that power to inflict so much injustice and injury should be lodged in the hands of an Individual capable of sacrificing his victim without laying himself open to the code of honour, or the liability of the law of the land.

Rapier and writ having been denied him in dealing with the Governor, Sam apparently fell back with zest on words.

It should be said that Sam's wrath was not all on his own account. By now matters had developed into a family feud against Arthur, with William as a more injured party than Sam. A convict servant of William's, one Samuel Arnold, transported from England for sheep stealing, was now accused of committing the same crime in the Island, where it was still a capital offence. In October 1833, Arnold was brought before the stipendiary magistrate of Launceston district, Captain William Lyttleton, convicted, and sentenced to death. Immediately after the trial some one at the court-house was said to have overheard Lyttleton remark that the master, Bryan, should have been standing in the servant Arnold's place. This tale was brought to Bryan, then in Hobart; he hurried north and sent Lyttleton a letter that was practically a challenge to a duel. Bryan failed, as he said, to get 'the satisfaction due from one Gentleman to another', while the friend who carried the letter was charged with inciting Lyttleton to a breach of the peace, tried before puisne-Judge Montagu, fined £150, and sentenced to eighteen months in jail. Lyttleton had reported Bryan to headquarters: Bryan began actions against Lyttleton for conspiracy and defamation of character, and claimed that Arnold had implicated his master from motives of revenge and in hopes of the reprieve which was in fact subsequently granted by Arthur. Denouncing Lyttleton as a spy and an informer and feeling that it would be degrading to remain the spy's fellow magistrate, Bryan now resigned from the Commission of the Peace, advertising his resignation and its reason in the Launceston Press. The resignation was refused: because of depositions at the Arnold trial, together with Bryan's 'most improper conduct to the Police Magistrate' and his 'Advertisement in the Public Papers', his name was erased from the Commission of the Peace. Also, he was informed that it 'appeared indispensable to

the Government that the convicts assigned to your service should be forthwith withdrawn'. Accordingly his thirty assigned servants were bodily removed from their huts by the chief constable and three others, all armed, bringing work on his farm to a standstill in the middle of harvest and shearing, thus causing Bryan great financial loss. He had applied to have his cases against Lyttleton heard in Hobart Town, far from Lyttleton's sphere of influence, but the application was refused by the Executive Council that had just dismissed Bryan from the magistracy. Feeling that it was useless to proceed against the Launceston stipendiary magistrate at the Launceston Assizes, Bryan abandoned his actions.¹ But still he tried to strike at authority; he challenged the legal right of the Government to remove his men, by means of an action for damages against the chief constable who had carried out the order for their removal. On the advice of the Attorney-General his application for a trial by jury was refused. The effect of this refusal, as Bryan pointed out, left the decision of the legality of the removal of his servants, and Bryan's demand for damages,

to a tribunal which might consist of Chief Justice Pedder, who, as a member of the Executive Council, had advised the removal, and of two Assessors to be nominated by the Lieutenant Governor, who had also sanctioned and directed the removal.

It was useless to go farther: Bryan abandoned this action too, together with a charge of improper behaviour by Arthur himself, and he left the country to lay his case before Glenelg, with a bill for £14,500 for losses and expenses incurred.²

Sam now asserted himself: fearing, or claiming to fear, that he too might be deprived of his assigned servants, he perversely forestalled such action by returning them to the Government at a time chosen by himself. While Arthur was paying an official visit to Launceston, Sam seized the opportunity, as he said, to send his sixteen servants back to the Governor's charge, declaring that had he known any governor possessed the powers

¹ Lyttleton's behaviour in this case, according to P. L. Brown, shows 'beyond serious question that justice in the colony was partial' (*Clyde Co. I*, pp. 71-72).

² William Bryan's memorial was published in London in pamphlet form. In this chapter use has been made of the only copy known to exist in Australia, that in the possession of the Melbourne author, Clive Turnbull, and listed in Ferguson's *Bibliography of Australia*.

of Arthur he never would have emigrated or embarked his capital in the colony. It was an ill-considered action and an almost hysterical letter; it did not need an Arthur to find it intolerable and it drew from Arthur's A.D.C. and nephew a cheap reply: Mr. Arthur was to express His Excellency's satisfaction at Mr. Bryan having returned the servants to the Government; the Assistant Principal Superintendent had accordingly been directed to receive the convicts and 'forthwith to reassign them to the service of respectable settlers'.

William's accusations against Arthur reveal that there was an even darker background to the lives of Sam and his wife. There was a nephew, Robert, living in the Westbury district and closely connected with his uncle William's concerns. In June 1835, after William's departure, Robert was arrested on a charge of cattle-stealing, in Van Diemen's Land, as already stated, still a capital offence. Brought to the Westbury watch-house one Sunday just as the people had come out of church, next morning he and his supposed accomplices were examined by the police magistrate, Lieut. Charles Lonsdale, and his colleagues Ashburner and Foote. Sam was in court, supported by his friend Mr. Sam Winter; later, Westbury's chief constable stated that the evidence and the sight of certain branded hides had convinced Bryan of his nephew's guilt: Sam was overheard reprimanding Robert, saying: 'You have finished it now, you have brought disgrace on the family and I shall sell up everything and leave the Colony.' Sam asked whether bail would be allowed, but it was refused and Robert was locked up to await his trial before Chief Justice Pedder at the Launceston Assizes some four months hence. The trial took place in October 1835. The evidence is an involved and unsavoury story of convict constables concealed near suspect stockyards, of branded hides hidden in ferns, of carcasses of doubtful relationship to feet (produced in Court) nosed out and gnawed by the constable's dog; of witnesses of improbable probity and likely connexion with highway robbery; of illicit relationships inferred and concocted evidence implied; illegal acts in William Bryan's past are hinted at, Sam's evidence is described as fabricated and not very skilfully fabricated at that: in the sordid drama of carcasses, hides and hoofs, horns and tail are not mentioned but plainly they are there. Gellibrand, honest and able, defended Bryan; Mac-

Dowell, the Solicitor General, looked after the case for the Crown. Robert had wished to be tried in Hobart, far from the locality excited by the affair and unlikely to produce an impartial jury; Stephen, the Attorney-General, declined this request, feeling that justice could be achieved in Launceston, and with less expense, by empanelling a jury of full-pay officers who, he assumed—surely without reason—would know nothing of the case or of the supposedly bad reputation of the Bryan family. By this jury, Robert was found guilty on two counts and he was condemned to death.¹

The trial was fully reported in the *Colonial Times* of 3 and 10 November, one of the most intemperate and anti-Arthur of Van Diemen's Land's newspapers.² Its editor, Henry Melville, who insinuated that there was a government conspiracy behind Bryan's prosecution, was thereupon proceeded against for contempt of court, required to find sureties for £500 for two years, fined £200 and imprisoned for twelve months. He wrote a further article from 'the felons' jail' attacking the Colonial Government for having continued, by deliberate decision, the death sentence for cattle stealing for which English law had substituted transportation for life. It can be taken that the decision to retain capital punishment for this crime, though not for certain others, had been approved by Arthur at the time, for it is notorious that his two councils (executive and legislative) never opposed him and were of use merely to screen the fact

¹ Jorgen Jorgensen, the remarkable adventurer and author, himself reprieved from a death sentence and transported to V.D.L. for life, wrote an account of Robert Bryan's trial. Published in Launceston and illustrated by a woodcut, it was advertised in the *Corn. Chron.* 21.11.35; so far, no copy has come to light.

² Printed in the *V.D.L. Annual* for 1836, together with a recapitulated account of the trial. The stealing of sheep and cattle was regulated by an Act of 1741 (14 Geo. II, c. 6) which made the punishment death 'as in cases of felony without Benefit of Clergy'. But reprieves were frequent and the guilty were often transported instead, not always for life: for instance, in 1831, of 162 condemned to death for sheep stealing 98 were transported for life and 20 for 14 years. In 1832 England abolished the death penalty for sheep, horse, and cattle stealing and substituted transportation for life (2 and 3 Wm. IV, c. 62); this again was altered in 1833 to transportation for not less than 7 years with or without imprisonment up to 4 years (Leon Radzinowicz, *A History of English Criminal Law*, vol. i, pp. 241-8, 312, 565, 602-3). From May 1827 to May 1830, of 451 condemned to death in England for all offences, only 55 were executed (John Lawrence, *History of Capital Punishment*, p. 14): this is in almost the same ratio as in N.S.W. where, for the three years ending 1835, 50 were executed out of 399 persons condemned to death (Stephen Roberts, *The Squatting Era*, p. 25).

that Van Diemen's Land was governed by one man:¹ had Arthur then thought it desirable to abolish capital punishment for cattle stealing, it would have been done. Equally, it can be assumed that he now thought it desirable to reopen the question, and that he thought so as a result of the publicity fanned so effectively from 'the felons' jail'.² Arthur referred to the question when he forwarded to the Secretary of State a petition for pardon presented by Robert Bryan through his counsel, Gelli-brand. In forwarding the petition, Arthur enclosed Chief Justice Pedder's observations on the trial.³ In his capacity as Chief Justice, Pedder found no grounds for recommending Bryan to mercy; when his observations on the trial were considered by the Executive Council, as an *ex officio* member of that body Pedder found no grounds for dissenting from his own view. In this severity he had some support, but the Council was not unanimous. While they 'concurred in the opinion of Bryan's guilt, and the aggravated nature of his offence', they advised that he should be transported for life; Arthur 'acceded to this suggestion'. 'It is only necessary', he told Glenelg,

I should report to Your Lordship that several very aggravated cases of sheep and cattle stealing, including those of Bryan, Simpson, Stuart and some others have been lately considered in the Executive Council, and in none of them did I deem it, after mature deliberation, absolutely indispensable to permit the Law to take its course. It has therefore become a dead letter so far as regards the enforcement of capital execution for such offenses, and I have accordingly determined again to bring under deliberation in the Legislative Council the expediency of abolishing Capital punishment for Sheep or Cattle Stealing, a measure which was before rejected by a majority of members.

Bryan, Arthur told Glenelg, was illiterate and the petition, 'drawn up by persons by no means deficient in astuteness', 'a political artifice' designed to excite, not so much in Glenelg's office as in the House of Commons, a feeling that the Colonial

¹ *K. Fitzpatrick*, p. 98.

² Melville was released, according to the historian West, because of severe censure by the House of Commons of a similar case: 'to judge, condemn and imprison at once and by the party offended, included all that tyranny could ask' (*West*, vol. i, p. 169).

³ Arthur to Glenelg, 5.1.36, *P.R.O.* The official copy of this despatch is missing from the *Hobart Arch.*

Government had found 'the judicial destruction of the Nephew' necessary in order to justify the 'measures of security adopted against the Uncle'—the uncle William Bryan, then in England trying to bring about Arthur's downfall.

The petition had been presented to Arthur in December 1835; the answer reached Arthur's successor, Franklin, at the end of March 1837 and was at once conveyed to Bryan at Port Arthur, where he had been sent to await the decision of the Secretary of State. His Majesty's Government, said Glenelg, had given the petition its fullest and most attentive consideration but regretted that they were unable to discover any ground which consistently to the general principles applicable to such cases would justify them in advising His Majesty to grant Robert Bryan a pardon. Glenelg agreed entirely with Arthur's intention of bringing before the Legislative Council the expediency of abolishing capital punishment for sheep or cattle stealing. If it had not already been done, he hoped that the Governor's early attention would be directed to it and that the Council would show no disinclination to revise and mitigate any needless severity in the criminal code of the colony.¹

It had already been done; on 24 June 1836, it was decided by His Excellency, Colonel George Arthur, Lieutenant Governor of Van Diemen's Land and its Dependencies with the advice of the Legislative Council that the punishment of Death in cases of Sheep and Cattle Stealing and for the killing of any such animal with intent to steal the carcase . . . shall be abolished . . . and every person convicted shall be liable to transportation for life. . . .²

In his despatch, the Secretary of State had a special thought for the miserable, illiterate, and erring Robert Bryan. Believing that, in accordance with the practice so far as he knew it, Bryan would have been sent to Norfolk Island of infamous name, Glenelg intervened. He felt that it was

desirable that transportation for Life for an Offence unattended by any circumstances of peculiar aggravation should not be a more severe punishment than is requisite for the public welfare. I have reason to believe that Transportation for Life to Norfolk Island (situated as that Settlement necessarily is) is a heavier infliction than

¹ Glenelg to Franklin, 31.10.36 (*Hobart Arch.*).

² Acts 5 Wm. IV, No. 6 and 6 Wm. IV, No. 17.

a similar sentence in any other place; and that it ought therefore to be reserved for Offences of unusual depravity or for Offenders of desperate character. There certainly do not appear to me to have been any circumstances in Bryan's case entitling him to peculiar consideration; but on the other hand, I should not be disposed to view his Offence as one of the description to which I have adverted, and I have therefore to suggest to you the propriety of directing his removal from Norfolk Island to Port Arthur, unless any objection occur to you to such interference . . .

Bryan served nearly six years of his sentence and then was granted a ticket of leave. Six years of Port Arthur's rigour might successfully break a man's spirit, if he had any, but it could not straighten a crooked mind: how Robert Bryan used the conditional liberty granted him in 1841 is unknown.

Arthur's recall had come to him as a bitter blow. For twelve years he had devoted himself without stint to the task entrusted to him by His Majesty's Government, the duty of punishing and, as he said, 'perhaps reforming', the prison population of which the United Kingdom wished to be rid. His energy and talent had turned an ill-controlled island of lax morals into a well-organized colony where, whatever a man's standing, it was inexpedient, even unsafe, to be insubordinate about morals or anything else. And now, as he believed, his recall had been contrived by a despicable character, a former colonist, a free settler whom he had been unable to crush. Of this he was convinced, in spite of Glenelg's assurance that the sole reason for Arthur's supercession was his length of service in Van Diemen's Land. That his recall might appear to be due to William Bryan's accusations, Glenelg recognized, and it was, he admitted, unfortunate that the recall occurred before the Colonial Office had received the answer that Glenelg felt sure, from the available evidence, Arthur would be able to make; moreover, Glenelg emphasized that he personally was certain of Arthur's zeal and assiduity in serving the King. But Arthur was not convinced or consoled, he was angry, and in the first hours of his anger he wrote to his colleague Governor Bourke:¹

Govm^t House

Hobart 25th May 1836

My dear Sir,

I feel it to be a mark of respect which I owe to you, although it is

¹ Arthur's letter and Bourke's answer, *M.L.*

not a very agreeable office, to announce to you, that, by the Transport which arrived yesterday I received a Despatch dated the 10th January intimating the early appointment of my successor (who is not named but I believe Mr. James Stephen) to this Government.

Mr. Wm. Bryan, who fled from the Colony when he ought to have been detained and put on his trial for a felony, has made all kinds of representations, as false as they are malignant, against my Government which have been considered in the Executive Council and most thoroughly answered—but, the answers were not received in England—indeed, have scarcely yet reached Downing Street—the time selected for my recall is therefore extremely painful to my feelings, and is not remedied by the very strong expressions of approbation which the Despatch conveys—I am positive neither Lord Stanley nor Mr. Spring Rice would have treated me thus!

As I only opened my despatches two hours ago, I have scarcely decided upon the proper line of action—whether it will be more prudent to wait for the arrival of my successor, or rather to yield to the wish I feel to anticipate that event by embarking in August or September at the latest—But, at all events, I avail myself of the present moment to thank you most sincerely for very many acts of kindness and consideration during the period I have had the honour to serve under your command. Will you allow me to ask a continuance of your kindness towards my dear son who will return to N. S. Wales on my departure?

If I can in any way be useful to you in London, pray command my services; and wishing you the enjoyment of health to enable you to encounter the arduous duties of your office—how arduous! none can know but those who have administered these Colonies—and, trusting that measures may prove successful in promoting the happiness of the People, based upon Religion and Morality, and your own personal comfort, I beg you will believe me to remain with much esteem and sincere regard

most faithfully & obed^{ly}
your's

GEO. ARTHUR

His Excellency

Sir Rich^d Bourke, K.C.B.

Even Mrs. Sam Bryan might have been moved to at least momentary pity could she have seen her enemy thus expose his wound. Bourke wrote to convey a decent sympathy, a sense of loss in the removal of an efficient colleague, and a rational suggestion of reasons for the recall. The letter is easy but without

warmth, except for the note of envy of Arthur's coming translation to the more civilized end of the world.

Govt. House Sydney

My dear Sir,

June 7 1836

I received the Evening before last your letter of the 25 May. It is to me a matter of great regret to learn that you are so soon to quit your Government. I owe so very many obligations for the kind attention with which you have received and replied to my frequent applications for advice and for the many valuable communications I have received from you. To me who am doomed I believe to another year or two of this work, if God spares me life, your loss will be severe; but to you a removal must be a relief. I can well imagine that an employment of twelve years in such an office as your's is more than enough to make one even of the most patient temperament or most robust constitution forswear for ever the labors of public life. I think and hope you may be mistaken in supposing the case of Mr. Bryant has had any effect in procuring your recall. You shd in my mind consider the event as resulting from the time you have held the Government and possibly the urgency of applications for employment with which Ministers on their first occupation of an office are sure to be assailed. The strong expressions of approbation which you have received ought in my mind to render you perfectly at ease on this head, and they should be considered as the Harbingers of greater distinction on your reaching home.

As I have heard nothing of intended changes I know nothing about your successor. The son of Mr. Gisborne is here lately appointed by me to be a Police Magistrate.¹ I believe he knows nothing of this matter. Mr. James Stephen having lately taken the Office of Under Secretary of State, I shd hardly think he would come out.

Accept my dear Sir my best wishes for your health and happiness in whatever part of the world you may be placed. Wherever that may be your disposition will lead you to exert your energy and talents for the good of those around you whether your station be that of public or private life. It will give me great pleasure to render any service in my power to your Son.

I am my dear Sir

Very truly yours

RICH^D BOURKE

To His Excellency

Lt. Governor Arthur etc

¹ Henry Fysche Gisborne, son of Thomas Gisborne, M.P.; later Commissioner of Crown Lands, Port Phillip District, and advocate of its separation from N.S.W.

Arthur did not await his successor. He sailed in October, unregretted except by the group that became known as 'the Arthur faction' and whose pursuit of the gentle Sir John Franklin was to be as malignant as William Bryan's of Arthur, and tragically effective. In the end, Arthur was able to throw off the discomfort, to him so novel, of being not the pursuer but the pursued. Arrived home, he wrote to Mr. Under-Secretary Stephen:

Now that I am in England again I rejoice, on many accounts, at having been recalled but it has weighed heavily on my mind that the measure was adopted whilst that man . . . William Bryan, was so grossly calumniating me—the effect, in the Colony, was painful in the extreme, not only to myself, but to members of both Councils. . . .

Stephen's reply was calculated still further to hasten the burden in its glissade from Arthur's mind:

Now that you have ceased to be a Colonist, you will take a metropolitan view of such strange people as William Bryan. We have always several varieties of that species about this office, although certainly this is almost the greatest anomaly of the kind that has fallen my way. Poor fellow, I would not have his tempers and his feelings towards my fellow creatures if the throne of Napoleon were to be the price of so much suffering. I have great doubts about his sanity. Be that as it may, I hope you will think the letter which you will receive by this post from Lord Glenelg quite satisfactory as far as relates to yourself.¹

The Bryan affair is illustrative of the unlovely acts that could and did occur in Van Diemen's Land in this period of autocratic rule, with malice and power on the one hand and frustration and malice on the other, and dishonesty on both. William Bryan will himself be pursued no farther in this chronicle; Stephen's diagnosis of doubtful sanity is the most charitable view to take. Arthur needs no charity: Glenelg's letter had indeed been satisfactory. 'After a full and careful investigation' of Bryan's charges, of Arthur's answer to them and 'of the evidence adduced on either side', Arthur's 'laborious and upright discharge' of his public duties was recognized by appointment to a still more important and still more difficult post; he was sent

¹ Arthur to Stephen, 12.3.37; Stephen's reply, 16.3.37 (*Arthur Papers, M.L.*).

as lieutenant governor to rebellious Upper Canada and rewarded for his repressive government there with a baronetcy and further arduous tasks.

On Governor Arthur's withdrawal from Van Diemen's Land, Sam Bryan seems to have ceased fire; perhaps his silence was in part due to damaged self-esteem. But scandal dies: if Sam and Jane had had children Strathmore might soon have settled into the happy home it was meant to be. One further blow, indeed, was to fall upon them, this time from the other side of the world. The Bryans were described as one of the most respectable families in Ireland; one, Richard Butler Bryan, was a member of the Irish bar;¹ another was called Robert, whether the uncle or the father of the sheep-stealer is not known. Report said that Mr. Robert Bryan was an amiable, inoffensive gentleman, a good employer, liberal minded and generous with his purse. In 1841, on his new-bought estate of the palace and demesne of the Bishop of Ferns, he had trouble in ejecting a tenant who would neither renew his lease nor surrender his land. The mild Mr. Bryan was fond of an early ride. One morning his horse came home without him; his body was found by his steward near a sheltering copse, shot through the heart. The *Cornwall Chronicle* of 30 October 1841 reprinted from an Irish paper this black tale, since it concerned a brother of Mr. Samuel Bryan of Strathmore.

Jane Henty had indeed embarked on a stormy passage when she put to sea with Sam. It is not surprising if by now her face had begun to wear the rather grim expression recalled by her nephews and nieces in later years.

¹ *III H.R.A.*, vol. iv, p. 385.

William IV

Whereas Colonel George Arthur
Lieutenant Governor of our Islands
of Van Diemen's Land and its
Dependencies has humbly represented
unto us that William Buckley
arrived at Port Phillip within Year
1843 under a sentence of Transportation
for Life and that since that
period he has by his own industry
dwelling with a Tribe of the
Natives of that place and that
it has appeared to the said
Lieutenant Governor from some
circumstances which have been
represented to him that the said
William Buckley is of fit object
for an Absolute Remission of
his sentence and that he humbly
besought us that We would be
gracious to please to grant the
said William Buckley our Free
Pardon - We thinking the same

William Buckley }
Free Pardon }

into our Royal Considerations are
graciously pleased to extend our
Grace and Mercy unto the said
William Buckley and grant
him our Free Pardon - our Will
and Pleasure therefore is that You
do take due notice hereof. And
for so doing this shall be Your
Warrant. Given at our Court at
Saint James the Twenty fifth
day of February 1836 in the sixth
Year of our Reign.

To our Truly & Most beloved
Colonel George Arthur
Lieut. Gov. & Governor of
our Islands of these
Western Lands & of
affairs and matters
wherein it may concern

By His Majesty's Command

By courtesy of the Trustees, State Library of Tasmania

37. KING WILLIAM IV'S PARDON GRANTED TO WILLIAM BUCKLEY,
25 FEBRUARY 1836

Part VIII

AUSTRALIA FELIX

1836–1849



I

A LAND SO INVITING

IT is a relief to turn from the Bryans and their involved and sometimes discreditable story to the strivings of forthright men like the Hentys and to the feats of those explorers of New Holland who first pushed inland. From the beginning Australian settlement was dominated by the problem of water, and therefore the finding of a river was the early explorers' primary aim. Rainfall at Port Jackson, in the first years of the colony, proved scanty and capricious, a phenomenon new to its inhabitants, migrants from a moister land. Until rivers other than the Parramatta, the Hawkesbury, and the Hunter were discovered, settlement was forced to remain close to the site of the first encampment. If Surveyors Evans and Oxley¹ had not found the Lachlan and Macquarie rivers west of the Blue Mountains, John Street and his neighbours could not have pastured their flocks on the Bathurst Plains: indeed, lacking rivers, the John Streets and other free men of England could not have found a foothold in New South Wales and settlement would have remained largely penal and circumscribed. Gradually, however, under successive governors, the rivers were found and with the finding settlement spread. But even after Sturt's

¹ George William Evans, of Warwick (1778–1852), prominent in early exploration in N.S.W. and V.D.L., and discoverer of the valuable Bathurst country and other important areas; author of a work on V.D.L. which was translated into French, 1823 (*Serle*). John Joseph William Molesworth Oxley, R.N., of Yorkshire (1783–1828), another noted explorer, served largely in Australian waters from 1802–12, when he was appointed Surveyor-General of N.S.W. Leader of two expeditions into the interior, both with Evans; his published account of one of these was translated into Dutch (*Serle*).

Murray River journey of 1830 'the Colony'—the area officially recognized as available for settlement—reached only some 300 miles west of Sydney and from north to south measured only 600 miles. Outside its boundaries were territories used as cattle-runs by landowners living on their grants within the colony proper. To the north and west, beyond the cattle-runs with their erratic waters that were sometimes flowing streams and sometimes a mere chain of ponds, the vast unknown interior rolled to invisibility; in the south, back of Twofold Bay, cattlemen knew something of the rich plateau between the Snowy Mountains and the sea: but for six years after Sturt's journey the 90,000 square miles of far southern New South Wales—the future State of Victoria—remained practically untouched. Hume and Hovell, keeping west of the mountains, had crossed it to Port Phillip Bay in 1824, soldiers had camped briefly at Westernport in 1826–7, but as late as 1836, except for a handful of settlers on the river Yarra and the few sheepmen from Van Diemen's Land moving not far from the margin of Port Phillip Bay, the whole region southwards from the Murray to the sea was waiting to be explored. In this territory, and still unknown to headquarters in Sydney, one minute oasis had been in existence for two years—that settlement made at Portland Bay in 1834 by Edward Henty and his brother Frank. Their establishment was, however, soon to be brought to the notice of Governor Bourke.

In 1828 Major Thomas Mitchell, 95th Regiment, had been appointed Surveyor-General of New South Wales in succession to Lieut. John Oxley, R.N., who had died from the privations of his expeditions into the interior. Endurance of such privations was only a part of the varied duties of the colony's official explorer. The Surveyor-General had his department in Sydney, where his clerks wrote out his reports and the junior surveyors recorded farm boundaries and entered up the changes in the colonial maps; but before even a small section of a map's blank space could be filled in with new-discovered ridge or plain or river, journeys had to be undertaken that meant great physical effort and innumerable difficulties and dangers—long marches with ox-wagons, pack-horses, and provisions on the hoof through valleys that might prove boggy or unaccountably dry; frozen nights on mountain-tops and nights sleepless from thirst or in

expectation of native attack; axles broken, cattle exhausted, horses drowned; delays that reduced the supplies of food; food shortages that led to scurvy. Throughout all expeditions a full record had to be written up nightly and a separate meteorological journal faithfully kept, whatever the leader's anxiety or fatigue: nor, in his record, did it suffice to describe the scenery as 'picturesque in the extreme' or 'wanting only a mansion to resemble some nobleman's park'—the description had to be supported with trigonometrical observations and details of the scenery's geology, vegetation, and animal life. The explorer had also to collect and bring back heavy or fragile specimens of natural history, later sent to England for examination by Dr. Lindley, Professors Faraday and Owen, and others with greater scientific qualifications than the explorer himself. He had to extract much of his information from natives whose vocabulary he had first to learn, whose unpredictable customs he must not offend and with whom he was forced to be friendly while perpetually on his guard. And throughout the journey he had to keep order and good feeling among his followers, a mixture of junior assistants and convict handy-men, and finally to bring the party back to Sydney without loss through illness or accident or through death from clashes with the blacks. Even by the best of leaders all these things were not always achieved.

Like his brother officer of the 95th, Captain Molloy of Augusta, Mitchell was a veteran of the Peninsular War. Molloy knew him as 'a most zealous and indefatigable person, and an excellent draftsman' and remembered that on the Peninsula Mitchell used often to be absent for weeks at a time with his sketch-book, alone among the Pyrenean hills.¹ In 1831, starting off from Sydney on his first expedition to the 'vast untrodden soil', Mitchell, now in his fortieth year, felt revive in himself 'the ardour of my early youth, when I first sought distinction in the crowded camp and battle-field'.² It is not given to all explorers to be inspired, like Sturt, only by 'a wish to contribute to the public good': Mitchell was not a selfless leader, and was openly anxious to win laurels for himself; nevertheless on his expeditions

¹ Georgina Molloy to Captain Mangles, 31.1.40.

² *Th. Mitchell*, vol. i, p. 5. Unless otherwise stated, vol. ii is the authority for this chapter.

into the interior he was Sturt's equal in the endurance and enterprise that such adventures demanded.

In 1836 Mitchell was dispatched by Governor Bourke to complete the survey of the Darling River, tracing it to its supposed junction with the Murray more than 350 miles from the western boundary of the colony; on the homeward journey the party was to explore the Upper Murray and was expected to return to Sydney in about five months. In March of that year, in the scarlet jacket and tight trousers of the uniform he is said never to have abandoned, Mitchell set off with one English-speaking native and twenty-two transported men, to be joined later by G. A. Stapylton, his second-in-command. The transported men, all volunteers, wore new suits of grey trousers and red woollen shirts crossed by white braces, giving them, said Mitchell, 'a somewhat military appearance'; 'the beauty of it is', he wrote to his wife,

that we have also a natty little fellow, formerly a huntsman, who sounds the bugle well—so that my departure from the camp or return to it, is accompanied by a flourish of trumpets.¹

Many of the men had already gained emancipation as a reward for services on previous expeditions with 'the Major' and now he had

obtained a promise from the governor, that if the expedition was successful their conditional pardons might be converted into absolute pardons, a boon on which even some wealthy men in the colony would probably have set a high value.²

The major carried his rifle and pistols, the rest muskets and bayonets, pistols and 'carabines'. Some of the men were mounted and led pack-horses, others drove the sheep and cattle that were to be their food for the next few months, and walked beside the slow ox-carts loaded with survey instruments, the carpenters' and the blacksmiths' tools, the tents, the gunpowder and the other stores. Two men had no other duty but to carry the barometers, holding them always in an upright position so that the mercury should not be disturbed. Prominent in the pro-

¹ *Th. Mitchell, Letters* (MSS., M.L.). The bugler was James Taylor, known on the expedition as 'Tally-ho'. Over-daring and no swimmer, 'poor little Tally-ho was drowned attempting to swim a horse over a vile swampy river' (*Stapylton Journal*, p. 156).

² *Th. Mitchell*, vol. ii, p. 3.

cession was a vehicle known as the boat-carriage, especially designed by the King's Astronomer at Parramatta to carry two whale-boats, slung one inside the other, for use if the Darling and Murray should prove navigable. This weighty carriage, the two-wheeled carts, and the flocks and herds started from Parramatta; climbing the road over the Blue Mountains, they descended to the scorching plains and wound laboriously onwards through open forest-lands, around rocky ridges and across dry river beds. On good days they would travel as much as fifteen miles, but when their wheels sank into deep cracks in the drought-hardened earth, or when projecting rocks had to be removed to allow the carts a passage, they might cover as little as seven. The scarcity of water forced them from the direct westward course; they did not dare lose sight of the muddy water-holes that this season were all that was left of streams usually full. Throughout the toiling weeks that grew into months, whatever the day's problems Mitchell observed with zest and recorded with exactitude the behaviour of the natives, the character of the rocks and soil, the habit of new-found plants and grasses, the discovery of small marsupials hitherto unknown, and later, when they reached less arid regions, noted with pleasure, as though strolling through some exotic park, the scent and colour of flowers, the jewel-flash of parrots in flight and the fiery crests of cockatoos. At last, often with the help of natives, sometimes in spite of threatened attack, they reached the Murray, a magnificent stream even in this year of drought.

Late in the winter month of June, with the 'supposed junction' of the Murray and the Darling established once and for all and much of his programme complete, Mitchell and his party, still close to the Murray, found themselves on a stream he named Moonlight Creek and within view of a granite-topped hill rising ten miles to the south. Here he camped, to rest the oxen, fill up his maps and reconnoitre the country to the south-west. He named the hill Mount Hope, since from its summit he 'expected to get an extensive view of the unknown region lying between us and the southern coast'. He was not disappointed: from the top he saw open grassy plains broken by belts of timber and, farther off, various high hills, probably the extremities of higher and more distant ranges not visible through his glass. If Mitchell

had followed Bourke's instructions he would have turned at this point and begun his homeward journey eastwards up the Murray, towards the mountains where the river rose, thence northwards to 'regain the Colony'; but, as his journal records,

The country which I had seen this day beyond Mount Hope, was too inviting to be left behind us unexplored; and I, therefore, determined to turn into it without further delay. . . .

Two days later, in the light of a fine morning, he looked on a scene different, he said, from anything he had ever before witnessed, either in New South Wales or elsewhere:

A land so inviting, and still without inhabitants! As I stood, the first European intruder on the sublime solitude of those verdant plains, as yet untouched by flocks or herds; I felt conscious of being the harbinger of mighty changes; and that our steps would soon be followed by the men and animals for which it seemed to have been prepared.

During the following days his spirits rose with all he saw—the flats with grasses waving like corn, the rounded hillocks as smooth as if already depastured by sheep, the purling brooks, abundant flowers, grass for the cattle and for themselves the promise of feasts of emu and kangaroo. With understandable delight, he wrote that they had

at length discovered a country ready for the immediate reception of civilized man; and destined perhaps to become eventually a portion of a great empire. . . . Of this Eden I was the first European to explore its mountains and streams—to behold its scenery—to investigate its geological character and, by my survey, to develop those natural advantages, certain to become, at no distant date, of vast importance to a new people.

The natives they met—undeniably inhabitants, though as such ignored—pointing to the south-east, spoke of a coast they had visited, where the waves raged: even the chain of stupendous mountains seen to the south east, even the risk of famine, could not turn Mitchell from his determination to take his party, with the lumbering boat-carriage, farther into the unknown and reach the sea beyond.

It was reached from their camp at Mt. Hope in less than nine weeks. It was not Eden all the way—they were weeks of laborious effort on reduced rations, compensated by mastery of

their difficulties and the joy of adding lakes, flowing rivers and a mountain range of striking beauty to the empty map. He skirted the range, naming it the Grampians, and scaled the highest peak, calling it Mt. William after the King. Mitchell now found himself in low country where his carts sank to the axles and the exhausted cattle wallowed in liquid mud. The party floundered over swamp, through stringy-bark forests and down ravines, unloading the carts when they sank, pulling them from the mud with block and tackle attached to the trees and reloading them once more when firm ground was reached. Hail and rain soaked the men as they struggled; some fell sick. Bullocks wandered from the camp and their searchers collided with natives, some timid, others armed and resentful of the invading whites. And all through his trials Mitchell continued to record his botanical findings—‘a new *Davisia*’, ‘a singular *accacia*’, ‘a charming species of *Tetratheca*’, ‘a new genus allied to *Correa*’—rejoicing in their leaves, downy or prickly, and their flowers, purple or yellow or green.

The end of their trials was presaged by their coming again upon a fine river, 60 yards wide, whose upper stream they had discovered farther north. Now, flowing between imposing limestone cliffs or banks wooded and richly turfed, it was making its way in the direction of the sea: Mitchell declared it to be the finest body of fresh water he had seen in Australia. The boats that had been hauled overland for nearly 300 miles were now launched and Mitchell set off down river with sixteen men and provisions for ten days. As they rowed, the men shot black swan and duck for the pot and Mitchell meditated on the expected discovery of a ‘harbour which might serve as a port to one of the finest regions on earth’. On the third day of their journey, pelicans and flocks of small sea-birds flew among the swan; soon the river shrank to shallows, ending Mitchell’s sanguine hopes. Suddenly, round a low rocky point there appeared through an opening the green rolling breakers of the southern sea.

The explorers emerged from the river on to a great arc of sand: a desolate shore, but to have reached it was a triumph. Mitchell called it Discovery Bay and to the river he gave the name of the Secretary of State, Glenelg. To mark the occasion he produced a bottle of whisky and together the Peninsular veteran and his party, misfits who had found their salvation in

following him into the wilds, drank a toast to the river, the Secretary of State, and to themselves.

Turning their backs on the sea, they made their way again to the encampment inland. The homeward journey to the colony had to be faced on insufficient rations, the shortest possible path found through some hundreds of miles of unknown country. On the first stage, moving eastwards from his camp on the Glenelg, Mitchell decided to leave the main party with Stapylton and make a *détour* to the coast about Portland Bay to determine for the first time the true position of its capes, named by the navigators and still known only from the sea. From a lofty hill that he named Mt. Eckersley, a ride of twenty miles through forest, swamp, hilly ridge and grassland brought him and his party to the shore of the bay at a spot not far from a deep and rapid little river and opposite the islands known as Lawrence's Rocks. Here, close to the beach, was excellent grass; the horses grazed while the major took some angles and tried to 'shoot' the sun between heavy thunder-squalls. 'On reaching the sea-shore at this beach', he says,

I turned to observe the face of Tommy-Came-Last, one of my followers, who being a native from the interior had never before seen the sea. I could not discover in the face of this young savage, even on his first view of the ocean, any expression of surprise; on the contrary, the placid and comprehensive gaze he cast over it, seemed fully to embrace the grand expanse then for the first time opened to him. I was much more astonished, when he soon after came to tell me of the fresh track of cattle, that he had found on the shore, and the shoe-marks of a white man. He also brought me portions of tobacco pipes, and a glass bottle without a neck. That whaling vessels occasionally touched there, I was aware, as indeed was obvious from the carcasses and bones of whales on the beach; but how cattle could have been brought there, I did not understand.

The puzzle was soon to be solved. Moving along the beach in the direction of Cape Bridgewater, Mitchell espied a group of distant rocks looking curiously like houses: houses, in fact, they were, as his glass showed, and sheltered by the bold cliffs a vessel rode snugly in the bay below. As they neared the wooden buildings two shots were heard—were the houses the home of bush-rangers? or of men who might suspect the approaching strangers of being bushrangers themselves? Mitchell ranged his armed

men and, to prevent any misunderstanding, ordered a gun to be fired and the bugle blown, sounds that brought to view a man walking towards them from the cliffs. The houses proved to be whalers' huts and deserted; but visible cart-tracks and a beaten path led thence, as the man told them, to a considerable farming establishment round the point. The owners, Mitchell learnt, were the Messrs. Henty of Launceston and the vessel in the bay the *Elizabeth*, brig. Whatever disappointment Mitchell may have felt that this corner of his Eden was already occupied was offset by the hope of food. He at once made his way to the house.¹

On that day—29 August 1836—Edward Henty was away from the homestead shifting sheep-hurdles at the spot they called Wattle Hill, seven miles away. When he came home at the end of the showery day he found Frank entertaining the major, Tommy-Came-Last, and seven other armed men: as Edward's journal remarks, the strangers 'might have been taken for bush-rangers and had I been at home, I should certainly have planted the swivel indoors'.² The major, he records, 'had not the most distant thought of our being here and was not a little surprised to find Englishmen in this Part of the World'. Francis, in his own diary, makes a fuller-than-usual entry in recording this notable event; owing to the nature of frequent references to another subject [i.e. whaling] he speaks of Mitchell as the Surveyor-General of New South Whales.

The visitor was shown the establishment and was much impressed, finding it

very obvious indeed from the magnitude and extent of the buildings, and the very substantial fencing erected, that both time and labour had been expended in their construction. A good garden stocked with abundance of vegetables, already smiled on Portland Bay; the soil was very rich on the overhanging cliffs, and the potatoes and turnips produced there, surpassed in magnitude and quality any I had ever seen elsewhere. I learnt that the bay was much resorted to by vessels engaged in the whale fishery, and that upwards of 700

¹ Mitchell's account of the Hentys and their establishment, *Th. Mitchell*, vol. ii, pp. 240-3.

² *Thistle's* brass gun. Various imaginary tales have been told (one by Edward himself) of this meeting between Edward and Mitchell, popularly supposed to have taken place as Mitchell first approached the homestead. Edward's own contemporary record shows that at the time he himself was seven miles away.

tons of oil had been shipped that season. I was likewise informed that only a few days before my arrival, five vessels lay at anchor together in that bay, and that a communication was regularly kept up with Van Diemen's Land by means of vessels from Launceston. Messrs Henty were importing sheep and cattle as fast as vessels could be found to bring them over, and the numerous whalers touching at or fishing on the coast, were found to be good customers for farm produce and whatever else could be spared from the establishment.

Mitchell, 'kindly received and entertained', remained with the brothers that night. Over supper, questions and answers must have flowed from settlers and explorer alike. The Hentys heard something of Mitchell's journey and particularly his opinion of the wonderful country not far inland, while the major learnt news of the outer world: in England, he was told, the Tories were back in office; among colonial news-items, Port Phillip was becoming thickly inhabited, and a commandant was to be sent there by Governor Bourke.¹ Meantime, 'below stairs', Tommy-Came-Last, uninterested that morning in his first sight of the ocean, was absorbed in recording new impressions of a different sort. The result was to startle the major a month later when he was woken one morning by the high-pitched voice of a Scottish woman resounding through the camp: it was Tommy, giving a perfect rendering of the accent and rapid utterance of the wife of one of the Hentys' men—perfect, though without the inclusion of a single real word.

Next morning the routine of the Bay was abandoned—no fencing, ploughing or planting that day for Edward or Frank. In one of the longest entries in the journal Edward records that

Self and Frank rode out to Cape Nelson with Major Mitchell to get bearings of Portland Bay Julia Percy Isles, Laurence Isles, Cape Bridgwater, the Morning was dull which prevented our seeing Cape Bridgwater he got bearings of all the other points and seemed much pleased with our attention, we returned home in time to take the Sun he dined with us at one and left at two to join his party we rode several miles with him we supplied him with 340 lbs of Flour—all we could spare—part of case of Gin Bag of Broccoli Onions a sample of our Potatoes etc.

Mitchell records the gifts (omitting the gin from his published

¹ Topics of conversation recounted by Mitchell to Stapylton and noted in *Stapylton Journal* (1.9.36), a bitter document, burning with hatred of his leader (*M.L.*).

account) and goes on to describe an event too usual to Edward to merit inclusion in his own journal, but to the major unique. While Mitchell and his hosts were at dinner and the 'hands' were preparing to net fish for the explorer's party, there was a cry of Whale-oh! The nets were abandoned and instantly, says Mitchell,

three boats well manned were seen cutting through the water, the harpooneer standing up at the stern of each with oar in hand, and assisting the rowers by a forward movement at each stroke. It was not the least interesting scene in these my Australian travels, thus to witness from a verandah on a beautiful afternoon at Portland Bay, the humours of the whale fishery, and all those wondrous perils of harpooneers and whale boats, of which I had delighted to read as scenes of 'the stormy north'. . . . The fishers whom I saw were fine fellows; and with their large ships and courageous struggles with the whales, they must seem terrible men of the sea to the natives. The neat trim of their boats, set up on stanchions on the beach, looked well, with oars in perfect readiness to dash at a moment's notice into the 'angry surge'.

Mitchell could not linger to see the end of the chase; accompanied by the Hentys he set off along the shore on his way to rejoin Mr. Stapylton at the camp. As they crossed the estuary of the little First River the major named it after Lord Surry, at Edward's request.

A month later, with the cavalcade travelling on its laborious and hungry way, and Portland Bay, the Wannon country and the rugged outline of the Grampians lost far behind, a halt was made for repairs to the boat-carriage. Taking advantage of the delay, Mitchell rode thirty miles off his homeward course, making an excursion to climb 'a lofty mountain mass' that he calculated should give him a view he particularly sought. On the summit, pushing his way through the thickets of wet ferns and scented musk beneath the tall trees, he saw, though dimly, what he wished. Southward towards the distant coast he was able to make out the waters of Port Phillip Bay; jutting into them was the dark point of Indented Head, and fifty miles from there at the upper end of the empty bay was something that must, he judged, be the infant settlement.

At that vast distance, I could trace no signs of life about this harbour. No stockyards, cattle, nor even smoke, although at the

highest northern point of the bay, I saw a mass of white objects which might have been either tents or vessels.

Despite the 'vast distance', he did not hesitate to give it as his opinion that Port Phillip held no anchorage comparable to that at Portland Bay. Signs of life invisible to Mitchell on his mountain were on that very day particularly apparent in the settlement itself; for its two hundred inhabitants, whose tents it was that Mitchell saw, were engaged in welcoming Captain William Lonsdale, their first police magistrate,¹ and in reading the notices nailed to the trees—the proclamation of the British Government's recognition of the settlement, conveyed through Governor Bourke.²

Rather obscurely, Mitchell called his mountain look-out Macedon because in ancient history it was a name linked with that of Phillip. In deciding on names for his discoveries, Mitchell preferred the aboriginal labels if they could be ascertained, as, for instance, the Wimmera and the Wannon. Next, he liked to link his new-found rivers and mountains with old comrades or landmarks of the Peninsular War, as in Mts. Arapiles and Napier and the Australian Pyrenees. Some, like the Loddon and the Avoca rivers and the Grampians, he named for supposed likeness to places he knew in the Old Country; a few, such as Mt. William and the Glenelg, are tributes to the great. To the wide regions of promise south of the Murray traversed during this year he gave the name Australia Felix, to distinguish it from the northern territories bleached by drought. His way back through this region to the Murray, marked by the heavy wheels of his boat-carriage, became the route of the 'overlanders', men driving cattle and sheep from the old colony to the new. For years the wheel-ruts remained and were used in recording the boundaries of local properties and were known throughout the country as 'the Major's line'.

¹ Captain William Lonsdale (1800–64), King's Own Regt. of Foot, arr. Sydney, 1831. The site of Melbourne was his choice. After successive government appointments he was made Victoria's first colonial secretary. He returned to England in 1855 (*Serle*).

² *Boys*, p. 53.

THE GLENELG PLAINS

Two days after Mitchell's departure John arrived to live at the Bay, despite his mother's foreboding that the three brothers might not manage to live happily under one roof. The barque *Guiana* brought him across the Strait, anchoring by chance on the same day as the *Sally Ann* with Stephen and 200 sheep. Stephen, the family explorer, must have cursed his luck in missing by so little the excitement of hearing Mitchell's tale at first hand, but he and John were at least able to share in the flurry of exploration that was the immediate result of the major's call.

Until now the Hentys had felt no need to travel more than a very short distance inland—they had no competitors and their flocks on the mainland were still comparatively small. But it was obvious that, once the tale of Mitchell's discoveries got abroad, there would be a movement to occupy this far quarter of New South Wales, and the brothers meant to be first in the field. Leaving Frank in charge, Edward, John, and Stephen, with the captain of the *Guiana*, set off exploring, returning three days later 'well satisfied with what they had seen'. It seems they had penetrated for the first time beyond the ground by now familiar to Edward and Frank, cutting a track northwards through the forest to the fine green hill that Mitchell had named Mt. Eckerley; there they chose a jumping-off place to the plains bordering the Glenelg. On their return Stephen sailed for Launceston in the *Sally Ann*, arriving there on 20 September with oil and whalebone, trophies in the shape of a cask of cheese and 50 bushels of wheat—their own produce—and, richest cargo of all, the first announcement of Mitchell's epic journey.¹ Edward left in the *Sally Ann* too, presumably to report to his father what Mitchell had told them of the new country and to

¹ Sydney's fears for Mitchell's safety were dispelled almost certainly by the schooner *John Dunscombe*, the first vessel to leave Launceston after the arrival there of the *Sally Ann* with the news of his appearance at the Bay. On 6 Oct., the day after the *John Dunscombe's* arrival in Sydney, the *Gazette* announced that Major Mitchell had been heard of, all safe, at Portland Bay. Mitchell reached Sydney on 3 Nov. 1836 (*Sydney Gazette*, 8.11.36).

discuss extension of the family plans. The arrival of the news in Van Diemen's Land intensified the growing desire to possess land across the Strait—an ardour that Arthur labelled 'the rage for Port Phillip'—and incidentally reminded Arthur that he perhaps had not hitherto mentioned the Hentys and their mainland activities to Governor Bourke. In October 1836, on the eve of sailing for England, writing to Bourke about certain members of the Port Phillip Association on their way to Sydney to press their claims, Arthur referred in a postscript to the Hentys' unauthorized doings on the far edge of Bourke's domain. 'I do not remember', he wrote

whether I have recommended to you that Messrs Henty have formed an Establishment at Portland Bay—they sent two years ago one of the family to England with an offer to purchase a large tract of Land at the Minimum price, and were well backed by the Duke of Richmond; but the Secretary of State would not hear of it, wisely considering that the Land was of far more value—they have, however, ever since continued in occupation of a noble tract of Land, and have largely stocked it—they will also, I presume, now be claimants and, possibly, will not inform you of the refusal they encountered at Home.¹

Just after this letter reached Bourke his attention was called to the Hentys again, this time in the account of Mitchell's journey submitted to him by the explorer himself, safe back in the Colony once more. In this Mitchell told of his surprise at finding that 'Messrs Henty from Swan River had formed a whaling and farming establishment' at Portland Bay. The settlement of two years' standing was now firmly written into the records at headquarters. But as yet headquarters continued oblivious, or at least unconcerned.

When the major had appeared at their door from the unknown, Edward and Frank must have been delighted to welcome him for his own sake; when later he talked to them of his discovery of untouched pastures infinitely superior, in his opinion, to the area of the Bay, their minds must have leapt to the immense possibilities for themselves. As the senior government officer

¹ Arthur to Bourke, 6.10.36 (MS., *M.L.*). When Mitchell's first published report reached Launceston, the *Advertiser* said (8.12.36): 'We have no doubt that the knowledge of the Port Phillip Settlement coupled with Major Mitchell's account of 'Australia Felix' will much tend to swell the tide of emigration to those quarters.'

concerned with land, Mitchell at once undoubtedly became in the Hentys' eyes not merely an honoured guest but a possible source of help whose good offices were worth gaining: in fact, with their now established habit of pursuing all avenues of influence, it is quite unlikely that the Surveyor-General was to be a stone left unturned. The Hentys were not to know that Mitchell was far from being *persona grata* with the governors he served.¹ Nor, probably, did they realize that finding a flourishing settlement already at the Bay was to the major perhaps a matter of some chagrin: to use the words of his second-in-command, it was

annoying that our discovering of Portland Bay as a Roadstead and good anchorage for shipping should have been anticipated by the Vandemonians, still the Terra Incognita is all the Sur[veyor] G[enera]ls and a good deal in my opinion ought to be made of such knowledge.²

Edward was still in Launceston when news of Mitchell's return to Sydney reached Van Diemen's Land; he at once wrote to ask the favour of his help. Somehow his letter—composed with evident care and unnaturally stilted even for its period—suggests that the major's squatter hosts had already asked the favour and that he had answered, 'When I get back to Sydney, put it in writing and I will see what I can do.' 'Sir', wrote Edward on 1 December,

Perceiving it announced in the Sydney papers that you have returned from your perilous and most important undertaking allow me the privilege of congratulating you on your safe arrival and to hope that the public will ere long be gratified with the particulars of your expedition which confers such vast benefits upon everyone connected with Van Diemen's Land and New South Wales.

If I might presume upon the short acquaintance which subsisted between us during your (to me) most gratifying visit to our establishment at Portland Bay I would solicit the favour of your informing me in what direction and at what distance from Portland Bay there is a country adapted for Sheep of a sufficient extent to meet our views, and in what time with the ordinary means I possess I should be enabled to make it.

We intend to increase the number of our stock considerably

¹ Various contemporary sources, and *Serle*.

² *Stapylton Journal*, 2.9.36, pp. 107-8.

during the present summer and it may save us much time and labor. If my recollection serves me I understood such a Country was to be found about 40 or 50 miles due North of Portland Bay.

I am not sure if I mentioned that our settlement there is formed with the knowledge and concurrence of the Secretary of State whose letter my Brother (resident here) holds, but owing to circumstances over which we had no control no application has yet been made to Sir R. Bourke on the subject and I fear it will be some months before it will be possible to do so in person, we are however desirous to obtain his permission to locate in the meantime untill an opportunity does offer. The manner in which our establishment is conducted you have had an opportunity of witnessing and I trust it met with your approval. The expenses which have been incurred there amounts to a very large Sum and under the control of my three Brothers and myself we hope by persevering industry and good management in some measure to redeem our heavy losses at the Swan River.

I am most unwilling to occupy your valuable time but if I may be permitted to seek through your aid for a licence to locate until myself or my Brother have an opportunity of personally applying to Sir R. Bourke on the subject I shall esteem it a great favour.

Before concluding, Edward added something that was in fact not the case but was a belief he was to cling to all his life: it might be, he said,

desirable to state that our sending Stock to Portland Bay was the first and sole cause of the Settlement being formed at Port Phillip, though we unlike the settlers there lay no claim for effecting any agreement with the Aborigines for Land.

I shall look forward with the greatest pleasure and anxiety for your publication which to me and thousands of others must prove a work of the highest interest.

Two of my Brothers are now in charge at Portland Bay where I return with a third Brother shortly.

I beg to remain

Sir

With much respect

Your most ob^t Ser^t

EDW^D HENTY^I

Family tradition always ascribes the Hentys' inland moves directly to the major's advice given verbally during his visit to the Bay. Among the many Henty papers there is nothing from Mitchell in answer to Edward's letter; nor, from the notes

¹ MS., *M.L.*



By courtesy of the Royal Society of Tasmania, Hobart

38. ASSIGNED SERVANTS GATHERING THE HARVEST, VAN
DIEMEN'S LAND

Oil painting by John Glover



39. MAJOR MITCHELL EXPLORING THE GLENELG RIVER,
AUGUST 1836

From a drawing by Mitchell printed in his 'Journal of an Expedition to the Rivers Darling and Murray'.



By courtesy of the Royal Society of Tasmania, Hobart

40. WHARVES AT HOBART TOWN, 1836



THE AUSTRALIAN BUSHMAN

From the Nan Kivell Collection, Canberra

41. THE AUSTRALIAN BUSHMAN

Lithograph from a sketch by George Hamilton

who drove cattle from Sydney to Adelaide, 1839, and on the way stayed at Merino Downs

written on it in the Surveyor-General's office, does it seem likely that more than the barest official reply was sent. However definite Mitchell's verbal advice, and whatever may have been his personal feelings towards the Hentys, he could not change the land laws, and as regards the ownership or leasing of land at Portland Bay the Hentys had no legal standing at all. Only within the boundaries of the Old Colony could land be sold, or even leased. Like other squatters outside the located areas, the Hentys could be granted a licence, not to locate, but to graze. This, however, was not what they wanted; as Edward's letter shows, they were convinced that, thanks to the Secretary of State, their's was a special case.

The letter arrived in the Surveyor-General's office on Christmas Day. On its back there accumulated various notes and suggestions, scribbled at different angles, over the initials of Mitchell and of S. A. Perry, his Deputy. Mitchell instructed Perry to answer Edward in the same terms as 'may have been' sent to inquiries from Gellibrand (of the Port Phillip Association) and others; also—personal conversations being one thing and official entanglements another—Perry was to finish his letter by telling Edward that 'Major Mitchell is absent from the Office etc.' Perry, who could not find any correspondence with Gellibrand, suggested that what was needed was a certificate from a magistrate or a Commissioner of Crown lands ('neither of which', he reminded his senior, 'you have the honor to be') and an advance by somebody of the ten pounds required from claimants for permission to depasture their flocks; the somebody, he felt, might suitably be the Sydney barrister, Richard Windeyer, connected with the Hentys by marriage.¹ With Mitchell's authority, said Perry, he would himself arrange things, and 'the whole transaction will be *en règle*'. But Mr. Windeyer, consulted, declined to pay; and Mr. Perry, reading Edward's letter a second time, discovered that what he wanted was a licence not to graze but to *locate*; and of course the SrGenl cannot assist him in this—having no authority from the

¹ Richard Windeyer, aged thirty at this date, had married Henry Camfield's sister Maria in 1834. Before emigrating in 1835, he had been admitted at the Middle Temple and had practised as a parliamentary reporter on *The Times* and other papers. He became one of the leaders of the Sydney bar and as a member of the first elected legislative council was an active advocate of economic and educational measures and an opponent of Governor Gipps on the land question (*Serle*).

Governor—perhaps therefore Mr. H. had better be so informed telling him how he can obtain a license to graze if he wishes.

There is nothing to show whether Edward was so informed or not.

Edward left Launceston for the Bay on 15 December, sailing in the *Sally Ann*. Up to this time the Hentys' had been a bachelor establishment: that era was now to end. In July and August Edward and Frank had turned house-builders once more; Frank's diary notes the erection of a skillion and a thatched hut, and work on 'the House'; the morticing of joists, adzing of floorboards, the putting up of shelves; the taking down of one garden fence and building another, perhaps embracing both the new garden and the old; and it makes a first mention of the planting of trees. When the *Sally Ann* took Edward back to the Bay, Stephen was on board too, carrying his wife across the Strait to make her home on the mainland. Mrs. Thomas Henty had tried to persuade her youthful daughter-in-law to remain in Launceston until Stephen could make everything complete, but Jane, fit daughter of adventurous parents, would have none of that. Nor was she daunted by the defection, even as the *Sally Ann* dropped down the Tamar, of her only woman servant, shaken by last-minute tales of cannibals on 'the Main'. The passage was rough and Jane was sick; when they arrived by moonlight on a Sunday night a sailor carried her ashore through the surf and set her down in the land where she was to be loved, respected, and enjoyed for nearly seventy years.

From later allusions the new dwelling seems to have been simply an extension of the old one occupied by Edward, Frank, and John. Arrived at the house, Jane was met at the door by Frank with the words, 'Welcome, Mrs. Stephen!' Pleasantly she brushed such formality aside. 'My name is Jane Henty, your sister', she answered, and entered her home. She has left her own description of what she saw. It was 'a comfortable dwelling composed of four rooms with kitchen and dairy, a bright log fire was burning, table spread with a large pot loaf, butter, piles of eggs, and tea'. Next morning she got up late, her husband being

engaged landing stores, furniture, etc., and Edward putting the sitting-room what he called 'ship-shape'. It had been white-washed on Saturday, and no time to remove the splashes, which he and a

man they brought over from Swan River were trying to obliterate; so I quietly returned to my room until the work was completed. We were a happy merry party, my three brothers, Edward, John and Frank, all thoughtfulness and kindness, but I felt the want of a woman's company.¹

Entries in the Portland journal had ceased with Edward's departure for Launceston in September and they were not renewed for many months. Stephen's record of the important events of 1837, known to have existed, is lost; John, perhaps averse from the family recording habit, seems not to have kept a diary of his own. Until Edward's was begun again as a composite affair in 1838, it is Frank who fills the gap for us in his own diary, begun when he arrived at Portland Bay, 'South Australia', at the end of 1834. His hand-writing is better than Edward's; the entries manage to be at the same time longer and less complete; like his brother's it is simply a landsman's log. But after Mitchell's visit the bare record begins to move; it is no longer the story of intense activity in one small area but of expansion into an unlimited and new world. The first signs of movement are notes of the arrival of additional sheep sent across the Strait in the summer of 1837 by old Mr. Henty: 700 by the *Eagle*, Captain Fawthrop, 250 by the *Thistle*, Captain Mills, 300 by the *Sally Ann*, Captain Dempster, 700 again by the *Eagle*, 250 more by the *Sally Ann*. By degrees the flocks were driven through the forests of stringy-bark as far as Mitchell's Mt. Eckersley, where the present little township of Heywood lies on the Fitzroy. So far, the brothers followed Mitchell's track. From here, where Mitchell had set his course towards the Murray and home, Stephen, alone of the brothers, pushed northward through more forest, emerging thence into partly timbered undulating country and soon on to the edge of the Glenelg Plains. At last he came to the wide valley of the Wannon River, and found the country all that Mitchell had described. Winding between hills that were smooth, richly green and closely resembled the Sussex Downs, the course of the river was marked by mimosa, banksias, and dusky she-oak, and by white-stemmed gums grandly branching and as large and graciously rounded with foliage as England's noblest elms. Here, where emu and wild turkey abounded, and herds of kangaroo, Stephen and

¹ Mrs. Stephen Henty's booklet.

his brothers could pasture their flocks, build their homes, and bring up their children. This was what they had been eight years seeking: 'Paradise', Stephen called it, and pitched his tent by the river, knowing that the goal was reached. Then, with the one man he had brought with him, he built a hut and returned to the Bay to begin the long work of turning plans into reality.

In this work—the expansion of the Henty establishment that followed Mitchell's discoveries—Edward seems to have played little part. Family records show that it was always the other brothers, alone or in pairs, who made the journey with men and drays to the station they were to call Merino Downs, and according to Mrs. Stephen Henty it was her husband who chose the site of the second station, Muntham,¹ and later of Sandford, a third; the first two were on opposite sides of the Wannon and nine miles apart, and Sandford was at the junction of the Wannon with the Glenelg. Was it that Edward could not immediately detach his interest from Portland Bay, the settlement on the site of his own choice? Or was he, as some of the family thought, too timorous of the inland natives to venture farther than Mt. Eckersley, leaving for Launceston to get his father's authority while Stephen, as his wife says, could not rest until he had gone right through 'the interior' to see for himself? Whatever the reason, it is true that Edward continued at the Bay, farming or whaling, or busied himself at Launceston concerting plans for occupying the new country, or went off in the *Sally Ann* to the new settlement, Adelaide, with cargoes of vegetables for sale; and credit for the actual work of occupying the interior should go to the other three, Stephen, Frank, and John.

If Edward was in fact nervous of the inland natives, so numerous and aggressive compared with the few to be seen close to the Bay, he was not the only member of the Henty establishment to feel that most reasonable dread. Shepherds on the Plains, after one or two alarming experiences, went about their lonely occupation in constant fear of attack, and it became difficult to persuade men to engage for the work. In later years the Hentys were able to claim that despite much provocation

¹ Mrs. Stephen Henty's booklet. Billis & Kenyon are in error in stating (*Pastoral Pioneers*) that Edward took up Muntham in 1836: no move inland was made that year, as Edward's letter to Mitchell, Dec. 1836, shows. Muntham was a later selection than Merino Downs, which was first taken up on 3 Aug. 1837, the date correctly given by Billis & Kenyon.

they had never killed a native—a claim that many pastoralists of that era and district would have been unable to make; but it was impossible for even the most sensible and humane employers to keep perpetual peace between their servants and natives resentful of the white invasion and covetous of the invaders' sheep. Not long after Frank took up his abode on the Plains his diary records a series of typical happenings, preludes to the district's grim events of the 40's when murder was done by both sides. Frank arrived on the Plains on 15 October 1837. On Boxing Day he started two men off to the Bay with sixteen bales of wool loaded on two drays—first harvest of 'the interior'; that was the day of the first of many skirmishes between his four shepherds and the blacks:

December 26th. . . . Natives drove Hayward's flock to the River and hurt 3 sheep knocked an eye out of one hurt a second and obliged to kill a third. . . . Natives rushed Burns' flock but without injury.

Thursday 28th Washed the remainder of Hayward's flock 400. 6 Natives came towards the Hut but not allowed near 4 came to the sheep wash and were friendly but very much frightened Counted Hayward's flock 684 1 died from wounds caused by natives on Tuesday.

Friday 29th Counted Burns' flock 906 with Hayward's 684 = 1591 [*sic*] Hands employed cleaning sheepyards Natives rushed Burns' flock and succeeded in getting 3 sheep

Saturday 30th A large Tribe of Natives trying to rush the Sheep again. One Native held Burns with a battle axe in his hand over him while the others stole the sheep Burns succeeded in getting away by knocking the Native down who immediately took to his heels John with 6 men and the Horse cart arrived from the Bay bringing the Rams Sunday 31st John and myself rode to the other Stations, after we left the Natives again attempted to sneak on the Sheep but without doing any mischief.

Friday January 19 Shearing as yesterday Fine day Wind easterly 4 Natives made their appearance but not allowed near watched us for 1½ hours & fired the hills when they left

Tuesday 23rd . . . counted Dwyer's flock and made his number right 990

Thursday 25th Shearing in the morning but obliged to leave off in consequence of two natives setting fire to the grass all around us within a few hundred feet of the Hut. John came over in the afternoon had great work to put the fire out

Wednesday 31st Commenced shearing early and finished Twomey's Lambs making 45 shorn by each man Wind S.E. Natives burning the grass by the River on approaching them they put it out but when we turned they commenced again with double vigour. Fired a ball over them which only frightened them a little, for one fellow returned making a circle and lighting a fire as he went, rode after him and frightened him away.

Thursday Feb. 1st Rode over to the new Station, on my return I found that the Natives had been burning close to us which spoiled our day's shearing in consequence of being obliged to put the fires out

Fear, exasperation, and provocative gestures on both sides—little was wanting to set more than grass alight and injure more than sheep. Not much later one of Frank's shepherds was murdered close to his hut.¹

Mrs. Stephen Henty was a courageous young woman, but when Stephen was absent on his journeys to the Plains his wife, expecting her baby, could not help thinking of her husband's danger among those dark and mysterious people, so sudden in their coming and vanishing and so skilled with their arms. In her anxiety she used to remember gratefully the man who was Stephen's usual companion, James Smead, a trusty fellow, she said, who looked after his master well. His name, variously spelt, occurs occasionally in the Portland journal; in the Van Diemen's Land records the spelling of names is equally inconsistent and it seems very probable that this man, deservedly relied on by the Hentys, was that James Smead, or Smeed, the 'lifer' who two years earlier had been granted his freedom for helping to capture the bushrangers Jeffkins and Brown. When Frank and John took the first flock to the Plains, it was Smead who accompanied them. The party arrived at the station on 3 August 1837, the day that Stephen's first son was born at the Bay—the first white male native of that part of the mainland.² His parents called him Richmond, undoubtedly after the duke who had, as Governor Arthur said, backed them well.

¹ Years afterwards, in a letter to the Melbourne *Argus*, Frank stated that this affair was the origin of the names of Murdering Flats and Fighting Waterholes (undated *Argus* cutting among family papers); he wrote to contradict an *Argus* article by 'Vagabond' lightly attributing native murders to Frank himself.

² It is popularly believed that Richmond was the first white child of either sex born at the Bay. Richmond claimed the distinction himself on the title-page of his book *Australiana or My Early Life*; but the true facts are given by *Learmonth*, pp. 151–2.

In September 1837 Edward returned to Portland Bay after one of his Launceston visits. With him were Henry Camfield, holidaying from his still-unprosperous farm on the Swan, and James Henty, bound on a visit of inspection of the Plains. The party came in the *Eagle*; this was the same schooner that had carried James to Leschenault in 1830, when he was new to colonizing and still full of hope for the West. Soon after that voyage the *Eagle* had brought a large party of disheartened settlers from the Swan to Hobart Town and remained to trade from Van Diemen's Land to the Swan and Mauritius. Now, in 1837, she ferried sheep across to Portland Bay and returned to Launceston with oil and whale-bone and mimosa bark. On this September voyage, with a feeling for continuity, James deliberately brought with him little Henry, his four-year-old son, so that years hence, when the older generation were all dead and Portland Bay was a place of importance, there would be a Henty who had once crossed the Strait in company with the founders and seen the settlement in its early days. When visiting England nearly fifty years afterwards, Henry described his childhood's memories to an audience at West Tarring, his father's old home; still later, back in Australia, he set down his recollections in a school exercise book, and there they have remained, unread until now. In them he recalled his first view of the Australian mainland—high cliffs and a black ledge of rock and breaking seas; himself held tightly in his father's arms and absorbed in examining the stern chin, so close to his own. He had looked at his father's face, so still, then at the faces of his uncles Edward and Henry Camfield standing alongside: there seemed to be something wrong. . . . Suddenly his father moved, the uncles threw up their caps and there were shouts of 'She's weathered it!' Undisturbed, he went back to his bunk and, securely tethered, went on hollowing out little wooden boats with his father's pocket-knife while the schooner, unable to make Portland Bay, bore up for Port Phillips Heads. Inside the great bay they anchored in shallow water somewhere between the site of the old convict camp and a low island of wind-blown scrub and sand. Landing on the island, Henry and his father hunted for swans' eggs while the uncles caught bucketsful of bright-hued fish from the Point Nepean rocks. Oh, childhood days of alternating joys and sorrows, piercing with equal

sharpness the untutored heart! Henry carried through life two memories of that unlooked-for visit to Port Phillip Bay: there was the deep disappointment of next morning's breakfast, when there had not been enough swans' eggs to go round and Henry, weeping with displeasure, had been given only a single slice; and there was the beauty of the harlequin creatures hooked by his uncles—a vision so vivid that years later it illumined for him the story of the Genie, the Fisherman, and the four different-coloured fish captured from the Arabian Sea.

Henry remembered, too, their arrival at Portland Bay on a pleasant Sunday morning, twelve days out from Launceston; there was surf, and the beach was strewn with the remains of whales, and there was a horrid smell. But beyond the beach there was 'Aunt Stephen', delighted to welcome them all and to show them the baby, just three weeks old. Uncle Stephen arrived soon afterwards from the interior; Henry, left to the care of Uncle Francis, continued to carve boats, while his uncle, working companionably beside him, made little houses like Noah's Arks with fore-and-aft handles and standing on legs: contraptions called watch-boxes, Uncle Francis explained, that the shepherds carried with them on their journeys and took turns to sleep in while the other men guarded the flocks. The last episode that Henry remembered down the years was of seeing dimly the distant capture of a whale and, later and all too clearly, a mountain of red flesh floating slowly towards the shore. There ended his first-hand impressions of the historic visit to Portland Bay.

The visit's main events are recorded briefly in Frank's diary—the arrival of Sam Bryan with 500 sheep in the barque *Africain* and the departure next day of all the available men of the family for the Plains—James, Stephen, Frank, and, this time, Edward, with brothers-in-law Sam Bryan and Henry Camfield; John, travelling a few days ahead with sheep, was to be overtaken on the way. Family tradition fills in this outline with a picture of the group as they emerged from the last of the forest and saw the rolling downs ahead: it seemed to them another Sussex, a Sussex of deep soil and no chalk, moreover a Sussex all their own. Throwing up their hats with a cheer they put their horses to the gallop and set off for the stations across the Plains.

WILLIAM AND MATILDA

EARLIER the same year Charles and his wife had paid a visit to the Bay.¹ There was now only one brother to whom the Bay was unknown—William, the lawyer, who had left his Brighton practice and joined his family in Van Diemen's Land at last. William, now twenty-eight years old, had retained much of the liveliness of observation, the enjoyment of the outward event, apparent in his youthful accounts of the departure of the ships *Caroline* and *Forth*. But his thoughts now turned as often inward; the few intervening years, and perhaps his marriage to Matilda Camfield, true sister to the unrobust and wistful Henry, had made him interested in what men thought rather than in what they did, and had increased his inclination for the cultivated pleasures of a quiet life, for its botanical gardens rather than its rugged forest trees. He loved good talk and reading was his chief pleasure; he delighted in writing and like James had a mild talent for drawing, though his sketches, meticulously exact, were less alive than those by James. He enjoyed a walk, but before setting out he ensured against boredom by choosing something to think about as he walked—a plan he recommended to nephews not yet in their teens. A loyal supporter of the family enterprises, his value to them, money contributions apart, was his legal training and his easy pen; both were to be freely used in the battles over Portland Bay and the inland stations but apparently he was not tempted to cross Bass Strait to look at those places for himself. James and Charles, devoted as they were to their occupations as merchant and banker, never lost their interest in animal breeding and their love of outdoor sport: of the three town-dwelling brothers William was seemingly the only one made exclusively for the office-desk, home-fires and a garden and occasionally for the cricket-pitch, never for the saddle, the camp and the plough. Here, one can be almost certain, was a Henty who omitted the daily rite of consulting the barometer and

¹ In Feb. in the *Sally Ann* (Shipping List, 1837, *Hobart Arch.*).

whose morning thoughts, if not indeed concerned with the pleasures of the breakfast to come, might be pursuing an elusive line from Shakespeare or a rhyme for some light verse of his own. Like all the Hentys he was a staunch churchman, and evangelical, like James; but whereas James was almost fierce in his faith, William's devotion, though part of his inner being, was of an undisturbing kind, expressing itself in active Sunday observances and in week-day kindly deeds and good works. He liked things seemly and ordered: he would have felt it odd attending church in Stephen's woolshed, as perforce was done at Portland Bay: still more odd, and not at all what Matilda would have approved, that Stephen's wife should light-heartedly bribe the whalers to attend prayers by promising them plum cake afterwards, with a tot of rum.¹ William's father had said that William would be a blockhead not to emigrate; but William was a townsman and not even occasionally a hewer of wood, and to wait for certainty that Launceston was able to offer amenities as well as business was in his case pure sense. And in the end he came.

On 24 August 1836, on a day when James and Edward, with Camfield and little Henry, were battling their way across the Strait to Portland Bay, William and Matilda and their sixteen-months-old son were carried in a cutter from Portsmouth to the ship *Fairlie*, lying at the Motherbank and bound for Hobart Town via the Cape. Accompanying them in the cutter as far as the ship's side were Matilda's father and sister Eliza—Henry Camfield's beloved Bessie. Mr. Camfield was in his seventieth year; Swan River had taken his son, New South Wales one daughter, and Van Diemen's Land was now to remove another: for him, each of these was a final farewell.

The *Fairlie*'s cabin, with thirty-two passengers, was overcrowded, due it is said to advertisements that the governor-designate of Van Diemen's Land was to be on board with Lady Franklin and suite.² Whether or not William was one of those guilty of thus making sure of getting to know Franklin, their ruler for the next few years, he must have found agreeable the prospect of four months in the company of the distinguished

¹ Mrs. Stephen Henty's Booklet.

² F. Woodward, *Portrait of Jane* (1951), p. 198.

explorer and his wife, and the names of Sir John and Lady Franklin and of members of their party occur often in William's diary of the voyage.

The *Fairlie* rolled at her anchor for three days, waiting for a fair wind. During the first night, before there had been time to make their cabin comfortable with extra shelves and hooks and a swinging cot for Matilda instead of her fixed bed, their little boy, Willy, disturbed them with the first of many dysentery attacks. But in any case the ship's noises would have woken all three, for the work of the ship, says William, began early:

About 5 the butcher (we have a butcher on board) gives his pigs a drive round the deck once or twice; and a good drove he has got, then at $\frac{1}{2}$ past a great clattering begins of knives and forks cleaning, chains clanking, cocks crowing etc. and at 6 the Sailors set to scrubbing the decks overhead with a noise that would out do a ship-load of babies so that we are none the worse off for being disturbed by ours between 5 and 6. At $7\frac{1}{2}$ o'clock the Steward's bell rings for the Children's breakfast, and at 9 (called $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8) the Cabin passengers sat down in number about 32 or 33, good Tea and Coffee is handed to us, bread and butter ad lib. biscuit, hot beef Steaks and cold meat of 2 or 3 sorts. The Governor's lady not there.

The children dined at one o'clock, the rest at half past three. And at this, the first formal meal of the voyage, the passengers found themselves placed in suitable order in relation to the ship's commander, Captain Ager, and to Sir John Franklin, his wife and their party; this included Van Diemen's Land's first archdeacon, the Rev. William Hutchins; Franklin's private secretary, Captain Alexander Maconochie¹ and his wife; Lady Franklin's niece, Miss Susan Cracroft; the governess, Miss Williamson; the aide-de-camp, Mr. Elliot and a surveyor, Lieut. Burnett, R.N. William, apparently a little concerned about the seating arrangements, supposed that the disposition was made 'by rule', by Mr. John Marshall of the Emigration Committee 'assisted probably by the Governor'. He and Matilda found themselves adjoining Captain Maconochie's party, 'but rather low at the end' with a set of young men on their right. Sir John

¹ Maconochie, described by *Serle* as a prison reformer, arrived in V.D.L. with strongly held theories on penal administration and was to prove a trial first to Franklin, then to Governor Gipps, and to add chaos to depravity in Norfolk Island, where he attempted to put his theories into practice (*K. Fitzpatrick*, pp. 152-66, 226-8).

made a happy impression, being affable all round and taking wine with William and many others, and Lady Franklin's manner was gentle and kind. The meal consisted of soup, with beef dressed in three ways, of the richest of which, says William, he was weak enough to partake, to his cost. At seven o'clock there was tea;

after that people immediately adjourned to the deck, apparently for promenade. I went below to help about Babet's cot, coming up presently, found the Archdeacon reading prayers on the Quarter-deck, with a large congregation. His manner very good. . . . At 8 there was Grog and a biscuit for those who liked.

But that Babet continued poorly, William and his wife, settling down quickly, were happy enough. True, the place was full of cockroaches, and one landing with outstretched wings on Matilda's shoulder looked larger than a mouse; but the 3rd Mate assured them that where there were cockroaches there would be no bugs—he himself for protection in the last three voyages had purposely kept a few cockroaches in his chest. On the whole the Hentys found themselves very snug, with their attentive servants, Mr. and Mrs. Hutson and with a porthole, their own armchair and hassocks and filter and a supply of eggs, cheese, and preserves. The hanging of Matilda's cot released her fixed bed-space below; this was widened by six inches, just enough to admit both father and son, and William's own space was thus available for stowage.

With their first squall, many ladies lay down on the poop deck, wrapped in plaids and shawls; meeting really rough weather, even the gentlemen gave way. It was Captain Ager's opinion that passengers would recover twice as quickly if they did not eat so much. William, after a sharp bilious attack, resolved to live plainer and renounce plum puddings. In any case, after ten days at sea, he and most of the passengers declined the breakfast beef-steak, now 'too high'.

But rough seas, wetted cabins, and tilted decks were discomforts that passed. Abreast of Finisterre, a pleasant social life was developing; by the time they reached the latitude of Lisbon the table at meal-times was full. William liked to be idle and said that if he had twice as much time he could spend it pleasantly. 'Sir John and his lady try to put everyone at his

ease and require no State'; the archdeacon was 'a *nice* man', who read prayers 'most beautifully in a manly rich voice, with a deep fervent manner and so humble and submissive'—he and William 'agreed admirably' and enjoyed discussing the affairs of the colony where they were both casting their lot; Captain Maconochie behaved with great attention; others were 'as nice people as one could wish to meet with',

some of them highly estimable and agreeable, we have a fine space for walking and occupying ourselves and the whole body of passengers are of a decidedly intellectual character.

Unaccountably, he says not a word of the intellectual treat organized by Lady Franklin—popular scientific lectures given on the deck, the earliest of them so shocking to the archdeacon that he retired to his cabin and would listen to no more.¹ But two pages of the diary are given to a more frivolous pastime that he and Matilda enjoyed whenever it did not interfere with their care of Babet, who was cutting teeth:

We have lately established a dance on board, tonight the party mustered pretty strong, Sir John's piano is brought from below, up on deck, and Miss Kracraft who plays beautifully, is chief musician. They marshal about 7 or 8 couple in country dances, Gaieties & Gravities etc. but Quadrilles are the chief, a Waltz now and then. Matilda has joined in the Quadrille party once, but it is awkward to be up at that Time. Sir John and his Lady are great Encouragers, and the Captain, though secretly I imagine no friend to dancing, concurs very readily in the plan. . . . He declines to dance himself being sure of a gale of Wind if he did such a thing. Since dancing has commenced, the games of leapfrog, French & English etc. have declined. Prayers too are *postponed* till $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8.

Responsive to small pleasures, less critical of conditions than his brother James, at sea William could live happily without episode; but if episodes occurred, great or small, he described them in his diary, sitting in his cabin wrapped against the cold or fortified by a mug of lime juice ('a luxurious beverage') if it was hot. There was that horrible affair one night in the middle of the South Atlantic when a ship running before the wind bore down upon them and, almost touching the *Fairlie*, passed by on the wrong side. Amid uproar from both ships, the *Fairlie's*

¹ F. Woodward, op. cit., pp. 199–200.

captain managed to avoid a collision; the other, in a stream of foul language, refused requests for his ship's name and disappeared into the night.¹ Then there were those happier *rencontres*, when vessels drew up within bowing distance and offered each other neighbourly help: the *Eden*, sailing direct for Van Diemen's Land with male convicts and willing to wait an hour or so if Sir John had any commands to transmit to Hobart Town—the ship 'an interesting object to us, lying so near, the Convicts heads shewed themselves by dozens peering at us, at every opening': the barque *Thomas Parsons*, offering to take letters to England whither she was bound from Nigeria with a cargo of palm oil—all hands in the *Fairlie* had been writing home since the barque had been sighted early in the morning, and the 2nd Mate, accompanied by Captain Maconochie, carried a bagful on board: lastly, the *Tigris*, bound for Ceylon, and anxious to send letters to the Cape; quite a party came on board the *Fairlie* with the *Tigris* mail—the captain himself, the surgeon, a merchant, and a gentleman travelling for pleasure who turned out to be an acquaintance of Captain Maconochie; they brought a Madeira pumpkin and stayed to tea. There was nothing to dislike particularly about the captain of the *Tigris*, said William, 'but I would not exchange him for ours'.

Scattered among the events of shipboard life are affectionate allusions to their baby and his state of health. Much of William's time, as well as Matilda's, was devoted to his care, to making his arrowroot and managing to get gravy to sop his bread, to washing him in cold water and dressing him for the airings on deck that he loved. Ailing when brought on board, there were days when William could say that he was decidedly better, or cheerful, or had slept well; but sometimes they had to call the doctor, who ordered laudanum and spirits of lavender to make him sleep, or magnesia for acidity, and later, when one hand was contracted and feet and ankles so swollen that he could not bear to be touched, advised rubbing him with camphor and oil. The doctor laid the symptoms to rheumatism, the cabin, said William, being constantly wet and Babet's bed but little removed from the floor; 'if he does not rally quickly we must make him a new bed-place'. Next day he was much better. On

¹ Lady Franklin, too, wrote of the terror of this mid-ocean meeting, an experience 'of intense and even awful excitement and agitation' (Woodward, *op. cit.*, p. 199).

the next Sunday—‘as fine a day for Sunday as could be wished’—he was carried up on deck in the arms of Hutson, their man. Hutson sat near the capstan and Babet lay in his arms without saying a word, ‘like a good little Boy’, while prayers were read and the archdeacon preached ‘an excellent, practical and pointed discourse’ on the recent deaths that had taken place on board. But as the ship approached the Cape Babet was ‘still a great invalid’, weak and in pain, with a heat rash and festering gums and a cough that would not let him rest. Matilda, too, was unwell and in need of rest and attention. The thought of a respite at the Cape, with a *large* room to sleep in, was a treat they could hardly trust themselves to contemplate.

And still William could write cheerfully of terns shot, albatrosses hooked, and of other ship-board small beer.

In the diary there are sketches of the coast made as the *Fairlie* approached the Cape and again as she left but there is nothing about the fortnight spent ashore. When William took up his pen again two weeks after sailing he had no heart to return to the events of that recent past; he goes back only a week and writes of Babet alone. He and Matilda, distressed by the baby’s difficult breathing, had once more called the doctor in; they had been comforted by his opinion that the breathing would ease when the stomach was relieved. When the doctor had gone the parents washed the baby and put him back in his cot, noticing that a change of posture seemed to give him pain. In a few minutes the low fretting sounds ceased and they thought him asleep. But Matilda, watching, called suddenly to William: together they saw that Babet had slipped gently from life to death.

That evening there was no dancing on the deck; the passengers kept unbroken silence in those first hours and all of them attended the funeral next day. Hutson had made the little coffin from wood provided by Captain Ager; the archdeacon read the service in a manner ‘very devout’; William and Matilda, comforted in their anguish by their belief that Babet had gone to a happier world, yet were glad to be able to find some badges of mourning to wear. William’s diary entry for the day contains in the margin one of his rare notes of latitude and longitude: the figures stand without comment, recording as closely as possible that part of the waste of waters where he and

Matilda had lost sight of the coffin enclosing the tiny mortal frame. On the next day, Sunday, both parents were present at divine service and each passenger with whom they were at all intimate took Matilda by the hand.

On 6 January 1837, there was a great stir in Launceston when news was received of the imminent arrival at Hobart Town of the *Fairlie* with the new governor on board. There was a stir also in the various Henty households, awaiting the arrival of William and his wife and child. Next morning little Henry was woken early by the bustle of his father's departure in the Hobart Town coach; his Uncle Charles had dashed off the day before in the mail-cart, a vehicle designed to carry the driver and one passenger only and to do the journey at record speed. In later life, Charles left an account of the eighty-mile drive, using an old joke to describe the cart—it was, he said, like the goose as defined by the gourmet, too much for one and not enough for two. He was

therefore anything but pleased to find the cart drive up with a female convict in it, whom the Mailman was under orders to take, passenger or no passenger. I had thus to accept the position or remain behind. It is said when a Henty saddles he rides, so I determined to go, and chance it. During the day our other passenger became so unpleasantly uproarious that we had to take strong measures to abate the nuisance. We just tied her hands and generally roped her to the vehicle. So after she had made herself hoarse and stopped bawling, we got some peace. Presently however when crossing the Salt Pan Plains we got a great jolt and out went the driver on one side and I on the other followed by my carpet bag, of course lodging in the slush. I got up a sorry spectacle, and was greeted with the laughter and jeers of the old woman, for whose safety we had so carefully and successfully provided. Prior to starting I had enclosed a supply of hard-boiled eggs to supply sustenance on the journey. Unfortunately these had been boiled soft, and the effect did not add to the respectability of one's appearance when, having arrived at Hobart Town, I shouldered my carpet bag, and thus arrayed and weighted on turning a corner ran bolt into a group of gentlemen including the Governor and my brother William. It was not the sort of meeting one would have chosen and its effect was to quench that spirit of swagger which had already developed itself in Australia, and then known as 'Colonial bounce'.

Franklin had just made his public landing and as he walked

through the town for the first time no doubt his eye was caught by more important objects than the dishevelled Charles. But William must have noticed his brother and broken from the decorous group to grasp his hand and sober him with the news that Matilda and he had arrived in Van Diemen's Land alone.

JOHN AND ELIZA

MRS. STEPHEN HENTY's wish for the company of another woman was not gratified for nearly a year. True, after some months she had at least one woman servant, one who had come over in the *Eagle* with her carpenter husband on that tempestuous voyage via Port Phillip, landing just after Richmond's birth. Her mistress says she proved anything but a comfort; in any case it was not just service but true companionship that Mrs. Henty wanted and she must therefore have welcomed the arrival of a young woman with a background much like her own when, in November 1837, John brought a wife to the Bay, one who, like Jane herself, came from the Swan.

Eliza Whitfield had evidently formed a friendship with John during the Hentys' early days at Stoke Farm on the Swan River. Her father, Captain Francis Whitfield, was one of those retired army officers who had looked to the Swan settlement for prosperity and found poverty instead. Stirling had appointed him Resident Officer at Guildford, the settlement seventeen miles up the river from Perth; the salary of £100 a year was doubtless a boon to Whitfield and his wife in bringing up their family of five daughters and five sons.¹ Perhaps the marriage of a daughter to one of the Henty family, now reputedly on the road to wealth, was a further relief.

Travelling with a young friend, Mary Anderson, and Mary's parents,² Eliza left Fremantle on 6 July in the brigantine schooner *Abeona*, 105 tons. They had a long though pleasant passage to Hobart Town, calling at King George's Sound and, more exciting, at Adelaide, the capital of the South Australian Province, the brand-new colony on St. Vincent's Gulf. The *Abeona* arrived at Hobart Town on 27 August³ and thence

¹ Captain Francis Whitfield, his wife Charlotte, and nine children arr. Fremantle, brig *James*, 8.5.30; there was a tenth child not accounted for in the shipping list in *W.A. Arch.*

² Alexander Anderson and his family, associated with V.D.L. and Port Phillip as well as W.A., figure a good deal in *Clyde Co. II*, and are the theme of *Early Memories of the Great Nor'West*, A. R. Richardson, Perth, 1914 (not seen).

³ *Laun. Adv.* 31.8.37. The *Abeona* left Fremantle 6.7.37 for King George's Sound,

Eliza probably completed her journey to Launceston by coach. Plainly, she felt her position an embarrassing one. She told Captain Hawson of the *Abeona*, an old friend, that she had 'come to Launceston entirely on her own introduction'; it seems clear that John's family knew of her coming, but the first planning must have been John's and her own alone.¹ Of the ten Hentys, she knew only the three who had lived in the West and of those three—James, Stephen, and John—only James was likely to be in Launceston when she arrived; more, she was a stranger to James's wife. As it turned out, when she reached Launceston even James was away, for this was the very time when he and his brothers were riding about on the Glenelg Plains inspecting their new domain. But Eliza need have had no qualms: she was

received with a warmth and affection surpassing my utmost hopes. . . . I have so many new relatives that I am scarcely more than two or three days at one place; John I expect every moment—a vessel has been despatched for him. You may suppose how very anxious I am.

She liked all the Hentys: indeed, as she wrote to her brothers, she 'could not do otherwise as all seemed to vie who would show me the most kindness and try to make me feel the unpleasantness of my situation as little as possible'. In Launceston, at Red Hill, and at Strathmore, where she spent a whole fortnight of her waiting time, John's family surrounded her 'with every comfort and elegance'—luxuries that after marriage she would have to do without: on the mainland, as she knew, life was still primitive and she fully expected to 'have to bush it awhile'.

The brig *Elizabeth* brought John from the bay on 2 October.² The next day he applied to the Colonial Secretary for a licence to marry without publication of banns, making his affidavit before Thomas Henty, J.P., at Red Hill, near Launceston and Spencer's Gulf, and Launceston (*Perth Gazette*, 8.7.37) and called at Adelaide as well.

¹ John's earlier intention had been to return to the West, in which plan Stephen tried to help him by applying (14.4.36) for permission to exchange his own grant of 5,000 acres on the Canning for an equal grant near Northam across the Darling Range. In reply Stephen was told that as the exchange would affect two different districts the application would have to be referred to the Home Government (*W.A. Arch.*). Obviously it was simpler and quicker for Eliza to transfer herself to Australia Felix. Her letter to Hawson is in the *M.L.*

² *Corn. Chron.* 7.10.37.

paying 'the usual fee of four guineas'.¹ The marriage took place at St. John's on 10 October 1837—'a nice wedding', Eliza thought it, evidently stalwart enough to banish longing for some one of her own. Afterwards they went to Strathmore for ten days. Eliza, strangely enough, had not cared at all for what she had seen of the Van Diemen's Land country; she thought it 'miserable, even after Swan River'. But she approved of the Bryan property, with its 'nice house' and its lake in front with six tame black swans and two Cape Barren geese—the very things derided by Edward—and admired the fine garden, the green-houses and other signs of a good income and well-ordered home. The honeymoon over, she and John sailed in the *Thistle*, landing on 9 November, only two days later, at the Bay. And that was the Bay's last sight of the *Thistle*, for sailing thence she was wrecked farther along the coast.²

Eliza's first letter from Portland Bay, giving her parents a full account of everything that had occurred, is lost. Doubtless it had sketched each of the Henty family and described meeting again Jane Pace of Swan River, now the sister-in-law whose roof she was apparently to share. A letter written to her brothers, Francis and George, repeats some of her story. For the past month she had been expecting the schooner *Emma* on her way to King George's Sound and beyond, the first chance there had been of sending letters direct to the West. It was a good quiet time to write: Edward was away, Frank had taken up his quarters on one of the stations; John had just returned from sheep-shearing and house-building in the interior and Stephen, with Jane and the baby, had departed suddenly for Launceston in the *Sally Ann* to have the baby christened, thus leaving John and Eliza the 'sole house-keepers' at the Bay.

John now renewed the journal, neglected since the day after Mitchell's departure; for a few weeks he recorded ships in and out, and goods sold, chiefly to the employed men—shirts, red

¹ *M.L.*

² *Corn. Chron.* 11.11.37. From the bay, the *Thistle* took a party of four men to Port Fairy to strip and load bark for Launceston. On Christmas Day, the only vessel there, she went ashore in a S.E. gale. Her crew set out on 31 Dec. in a whaleboat for Port Phillip, arriving there three days later after running aground on Mud Island where James and Henry had hunted for swans' eggs three months before. *Thistle's* timbers are said to be still buried in the Port Fairy sand (*Learmonth*, pp. 62-63).

or checked; 'trowsers', fustian, cord or duck; boots or English shoes; Negro Head tobacco. After her long holiday, the same period, says Eliza, was serving to break her in once more to the almost forgotten art of domestic management. Evidently Mrs. Stephen, as First Lady, had kept the reins in her own hands.

At last, wrote Eliza, she was happily settled at Portland Bay. She was not at all lonely; indeed, she was more than contented with life. In her opinion,

If old bachelors and old maids had any idea of what an exquisite thing it is to get married, I am sure they would change their state of life immediately. I am only sorry I did not marry ten years ago, however better late than never.

And, by the way, 'how do my old beaus exist without me?' she asks, and sends her love to one, to another the recipe for the Henty method of growing their sheep-dip tobacco, and asks about the plans of a third. For her brothers, whom she loves and whose poor prospects worry her, she describes conditions at the Bay. She declared they would be 'very much astonished at Government ever settling Swan River if you were to see the fine Land there is here and at South Australia'—not having heard, evidently, that the Swan was settled before any government authority had set eyes on these delectable parts. Like little Henry, she had

found the smell of sundry dead whales on the beach extremely disagreeable at first but either they have been washed away by the sea or I am become accustomed to it but I do not perceive it now in the least. . . . There are three whaling establishments here besides ours so plenty of opposition . . . we have sent upwards of 250 tons of oil home this year. I expect it will be a good price as the North Fishery have failed again. Last year it fetched £40 a ton and it fell to £15 as there was a report that the North Fishery was doing well. We were in sad dismay as if ours was to go at that price we were done for. However by the last account it is up again and hope will be when ours gets home. . . . There are to be 40 boats whaling in the bay this season belonging to different parties. I hope between them we will have the good luck to get some oil. The men are very expensive, the wages of the whalers alone last year was £2000. . . . There is a good schooner just anchored. I dare say the whalers are in great consternation as many of them are runaway convicts.

Not only in whaling were the labour costs high:

This is a very expensive establishment—so many men employed, even though they do not get half the wages men do at the Swan River, a shepherd 30 and 36 pounds a year and has to pay for any sheep he loses or lets the native dogs kill. All the other men including carpenter and blacksmith 20 or 25 [pounds] and rations of course.

There was one rather grim respect in which, as Eliza admitted, Portland Bay and Adelaide were inferior to the West—the Swan was beyond the reach of bushrangers. Employed runaways such as those she spoke of among the whalers, though their behaviour was often riotous, were in a different category from runaways living by means of robbery under arms. For the threat to peace of such as these, Major Mitchell's boat-carriage was to blame, for since its heavy wheels had marked a line from the Bay back to the Murray the country had become accessible not only to enterprising land-seekers and men droving stock but to bad characters absconding from the north.¹ Swan River, said Eliza,

certainly possesses the advantage of being free from bushrangers which are the most uncomfortable visitors to be always expecting and there being a dray-road between this and Sydney we may constantly expect them. A party of seven left Sydney I suppose intending to live about the fisheries but they murdered each other till there was only one left and he gave himself up. What a happy escape we had from such wretches.

Eliza's tale was substantially true. It had begun in the neighbourhood of the Goulburn River when seven stockmen had absconded from their flocks to join two bushrangers known to be hovering in the country close by. The stockmen's employers were Charles Bonney and George Hamilton, two young Englishmen of education who, preferring life in the bush to the small-town existence of Sydney, eagerly accepted the responsible, adventurous and often dangerous task of 'overlanding' stock across New South Wales to the new settlements Melbourne and Adelaide, hitherto dependent on small and costly supplies by sea.² Bonney's 10,000 sheep were the first to cross the Murray

¹ One Thomas Whitten, captured and under sentence of death, gave details of his party's plan to travel overland from Sydney to 'the new country', robbing John Street of Woodlands, Bathurst, on the way (MS., *M.L.*).

² Both men were well-known at the time. Bonney (1813-97) carried out a good

(March 1837); just a day's journey behind him was Hamilton, with 500 head of cattle. One of Hamilton's men joined the bushrangers, and six of Bonney's, two of whom, Comerford and Dignum, became notorious for the subsequent events. Comerford, a good-looking Tipperary lad, a soldier's servant court-martialled for desertion, had been sentenced at the age of twenty to transportation beyond the seas. He had no previous conviction and was sentenced to the minimum period of seven years. Dignum, his companion, also Irish, was an 'old hand', by his own account familiar with many crimes and most of the colonial jails. Comerford had arrived in Sydney at the end of 1835; he could read and write, he had all his life before him: in a short time he could have earned a ticket-of-leave and soon after that his freedom and a chance to make for himself a respected place in the community, as many another had done. But, absconding from his first assignment after six months, and passing himself off as free and colonial born, when he agreed to join the bushrangers on the Goulburn he shut the door on all future hope.

The party, now nine in number, disappeared from the neighbourhood of the overlanders and were not heard of again for several weeks. Then, one day when Bonney was absent among his sheep, Comerford and Dignum descended on the camp, 'held up' the hut-keepers, stole all the provisions and other stores that they could carry, including Bonney's favourite little gun, and made off again. Before the two left, the hut-keepers ventured to ask what had become of the rest of their former fellow workers with the flocks. The replies were evasive. Was it these questions, and the horrors they recalled, that moved Comerford shortly afterwards to give himself up? Here is the story that he told to the police and that filtered through to the settlers at the Bay. After leaving the Goulburn district, the bushrangers had made for the neighbourhood of Portland Bay. On their way there Comerford and Dignum were warned by one of the party, a shoemaker, that the others, all Englishmen, were plotting to murder the two who were Irish. The Irishmen decided to act first. Early one morning, with ghastly deliberation, they and their informant uncovered the heads of the six who still slept,

deal of early exploration and later served in South Australia as a politician and as a public official (*Serle, and Bonney's Autobiographical Notes, MS., M.L.*).

and hacked the sleepers to death. Smashing the skulls, they burnt the bodies and covered up the remains. Then Comerford, watching his opportunity, killed their informant the shoemaker, and with Dignum dragged the body to a water-hole 'near the Major's road' and covered it with long grass. They then made their way to Port Phillip, where they were recognized and caught. Escaping from their handcuffs, racing for liberty again, thieving and threatening and dodging arrest, they descended, as described, on Bonney's camp. From there they went to the Murray and there, on Comerford's confession to the police, they were taken into custody and sent to Sydney for trial.

Eliza wrote of this affair too soon to know its end. Dignum was held in custody while Comerford was sent back under police escort to the Portland Bay district to find the evidence that would corroborate his tale. He was to point out places and relics—the carcass of a horse, stolen and later shot for food, 'the musquet left by Dignum in the hollow tree about 100 miles from Port Phillip'; above all, the remains of the murdered men. On foot, he led his captors through the forest to the funeral pyre of the six men. The fire that he and Dignum had lit and piled and stoked had failed to hide the crime. What were Comerford's feelings on viewing again those charred accusing bones? What hope had he now from life? While leading his escort to the water-hole and the seventh corpse, chance left him alone for a while with only one guard: he seized the man's gun, shot him dead, and escaped into the bush once more. He was not free for long. On his way, it was said, to attack Bonney's camp again he was recognized and captured by some hut-keepers who chained him to a dray and took him to the settlement at Port Phillip. Conveyed once more to Sydney and there charged with the wilful murder of Constable Matthew Tompkins at Deep Creek, he pleaded guilty, knowing it meant death. He wanted no escape: Dr. Polding, the beloved bishop of his childhood's faith, had been with him constantly, and Comerford now looked forward to the day that would release him from his misery and 'launch him into eternal life'. Praying fervently to the last, he was hanged—hanged, as the *Australian* reported, 'at the usual hour', his body hanging 'for the usual time' and smothered in quick lime before burial in the jail yard. Dignum, much older, and once so much more reckless a breaker of the law, could not

be charged with murder, the only witness being dead. Convicted on a charge of horse-stealing, he was transported to Norfolk Island for life.¹

‘Such wretches’, as Eliza called them, were an ever-present anxiety to lonely householders, and their easy evasion of capture in distant settlements was one of the reasons for dispersion’s unpopularity with the governors of the day. Only recently, the Henty household had thought themselves attacked by just such a ‘wretch’. Eliza does not mention the episode, but it is described by Mrs. Stephen Henty and also by the supposed miscreant himself. An English Quaker family called Hack, old-time acquaintance of the Hentys, had arrived in Launceston with Captain Hart in the barque *Isabella* early in 1837² on their way to settle in South Australia, where they later became prominent in agricultural and pastoral affairs. One brother, Stephen, was soon engaged getting cattle to Adelaide from Sydney, bringing them to Portland Bay by Mitchell’s homeward route for shipment thence to Adelaide. Hack left Sydney with 500 head of cattle towards the end of November 1837 and arrived three months later at the Bay.³ From there he wrote to his mother in London:

I promised to give thee some account of my journey from Sydney to Portland Bay. I had no opportunity of keeping a regular journal, but I will give thee a history of the principal occurrences as nearly as I can recollect them.

It was the journey’s last occurrence that concerns this tale. ‘When I got to the Bay’, wrote Hack,

it was sometime after dark and I rapped at Mr. Henty’s door. During the whole of the journey from the Hume [i.e. Murray] I did not take my clothes off a single night and I looked such a wild deplorable figure that John Henty was within a toss-up of a penny of shooting me for a bushranger. I assure thee it isn’t pleasant to be at the wrong end of a double-barrelled gun, cocked and levelled at one’s head. To say the truth, he was so flustered that I was thinking

¹ *Indents*, 1835 (M.L.); Bonney’s *Notes*, p. 5; Colonial Secretary to Police Magistrate, Melbourne, 13.10.37 (*Melb. Arch.*). *Australian*, 18.7.37, 29.5.38, 1.6.38.

² *Laun. Adv.* 5.1.37. They left Launceston for Kangaroo Island 28.1.37. In the following May the *Isabella* was totally wrecked at Cape Nelson, a steep headland some miles west of Portland Bay, and the ship’s company was rescued and cared for by Stephen Henty and his wife (Contemporary press, Henty pamphlet).

³ Typescript papers in the possession of Mr. J. Barton Hack, of Melbourne.

he would pull without knowing it. It really was a laughable scene and, though I was rather scandalized, I could not help giving one of my rather remarkable laughs. There was—but let's begin regular. The scene of action was in Henty's back-yard opposite the scullery door, which was the first I could find as it was just ten o'clock at night. In the foreground was the shoe-boy, with his eyes open a preternatural width and his hair fairly on end. Next was John Henty, gun in hand as I have described, and holding by his coat collar on each side were Mrs. Stephen and Mrs. John Henty, both scared out of their wits. An old woman was peeping through a half-opened door and a girl was trying to hide under the dresser or some such place. It was a long time before I could persuade them that I was not a bush-ranger, as they had been greatly troubled by those gentry. My trousers certainly had only a leg and a half, and I had only half a shirt left, and my hair and beard were in a very wild state; I don't think thee would have known me in the least. The old woman was a fortnight before she was convinced that I was honest.

Mrs. Stephen Henty's account is from inside the door and omits all reference to tremors and womanly clinging. To Hack's assurance from the darkness beyond that his party were not bushrangers but overlanders with cattle, John, she says, called out 'How are we to know you are what you say you are?' 'Only the word of a gentleman', was the reply. It was an answer that many a plausible bushranger might have made, but it convinced Mrs. Stephen Henty: 'Open the door, please!' she commanded John, and

when Mr. Hack sprang into the house I apologised for such treatment, shaking hands with him. He said 'Thank you, Mrs. Henty, *you* believe me.' . . . Mr. Hack presented a woeful appearance, his hair hanging nearly to his waist and his clothes in ribbons. A good wash and fresh suit of clothes made a different man of him; he was only 23.

He looked still more civilized next day, when, to the amusement of John, Mrs. Stephen cut Hack's hair.

Like everyone else, young Hack found the Hentys extraordinarily kind. *En route* for the Bay, after a narrow escape from natives near the Grampians, he had camped with Stephen and Frank at their station on the Plains a day's ride from those forested crags. Hack said that he could not

express sufficiently the kindness that Stephen Henty, in particular,

has taken every opportunity of showing me; they could not have done more for me if I had been their brother.

The Hentys, he said, were 'doing a great stroke of business at the Bay'; they had 10,000 ewes and 200 head of cattle, employed seventy whalers and manned six or seven boats. From Adelaide Hack's brother reported that in the 1837 season the Hentys had made upwards of £3,000.

The presence of even respectable overlanders, as Eliza's letter revealed, meant trouble at the Bay. One J. M. Darlot, with 700 cattle for Adelaide, had arrived and, like Hack, was entertained in the Henty home; another, Captain Hart, who by then had wrecked his ship, the *Isabella*, and was now in command of the barque *Hope*, had anchored in the bay, come by arrangement with the Hacks to ship their cattle thence to Adelaide. 'All those folk', said Eliza,

are quarrelling about their cattle—going back on bargain, etc., and there is a great piece of work. Hart will not take the cattle on board unless on his own terms and the other parties are as obstinate in their own opinion. I should not wonder if it ended in sending them all back to Sydney again. However we have nothing to do with it except being teased to death hearing both sides and having four persons to breakfast, dinner and sleep—agents or managers or whatever they choose to call themselves give me work enough and make me as waspish as possible.

Eliza added later that 'all those people have settled about the cattle'—but, still a little waspish, observed that they had already managed to drown three of the animals in getting them aboard. 'I fear', she said, 'they will make a bad job of it.'

Very soon Eliza was to find herself remote from the traffic and bickerings of the Bay, for she and John were to move inland and live in a house of their own.

MERINO DOWNS

ON New Year's Day, 1838, John, with James Smead and three other men, 'moved on to the creek'¹ to begin the homestead later known as Merino Downs. Drays now went up with building materials, returned to the Bay with wool, and were dispatched again with more supplies. Carpenters were busy in the saw-pit, plasterers with the growing walls; chimneys were built and sodded. John helped with the plastering and Frank made the doors. 'My dear husband', wrote Eliza,

is very busy having a house built for me . . . 60 miles from this, a beautiful tract of country that Major Mitchell discovered and called Australia Felix, it is so lovely he told Stephen about it and they have removed nearly all their stock out. Dear John and I go to live there and my brother-in-law Frank Henty will be with us. I daresay it will be a little lonely as there is not a being near us but there are large flocks of sheep and the shepherds must have someone to look after them to make them mind their business. . . . We are going to set up a large dairy farm at the Glenelg Plains and have men to superintend it; it would be too much for Jane or I as there will be from 50 to 100 cows. A good many vessels put in here on their passage elsewhere either wind-bound or in want of supplies.

The house, begun in the New Year, was only three months later in a state to receive its mistress. The furniture and the crockery had already gone up, and a dray-load of provisions that included fine flour, as distinct from 'whaler's flour' for the men; also, a case of port wine for John. By the end of February John was back at the Bay; apparently only Stephen's return from Launceston was awaited and then John and Eliza would set off themselves. One day they sighted a schooner, thought to be the *Sally Ann* with Stephen and Jane, 'and were in a great fuss getting all to rights'; but she proved to be the long-awaited *Emma* on her way to the West and the flurry now was due to efforts to get all possible letters ready before she sailed, for such a chance was unlikely to occur again until the next summer and the easing of the westerly winds. When the *Sally Ann* did in fact

¹ Now known as Henty Creek, running into the Wannon.

arrive on the last day of March (1838), she brought not only Stephen and Jane and the infant, now dignified with the ducal name of Richmond, but the instigator of the whole Henty enterprise, old Thomas, and Frances, his wife.¹ John recorded the arrival of 'Father and Mother' in the bleak style thought proper to the journal and then all entries ceased again for several months. But for young Mr. Hack, we should know nothing more of the Thomas Hentys and their visit to Portland Bay: writing on 27 April, Hack, speaking of the Hentys, says 'the old gentleman and lady are now at the Bay and seem to enjoy seeing the country very much'. How much of the country they saw, there is nothing to show; but even if Mrs. Henty, at sixty-two, had to content herself with the nearer neighbourhood and a grandmother's role, it is difficult to imagine her husband, a year older, baulking at a fifty-mile ride with his sons to see the interior of Australia Felix for himself.

The John Hentys probably left for Merino Downs almost at once. There, even before the next summer, life began to press hardly on them and flaws were visible in the married life Eliza had found exquisite at the start. Eliza betrays the change in a letter written in April 1839, when they had been in the interior for about a year. It is headed Australia Felix but its mood is no match for the name. Eliza had lost her baby ('that unfortunate affair', she calls it); it was now the lambing season and John often had to be away from morning till night for a week at a time 'setting all to rights'; Eliza was often lonely 'shut up in the house' by herself. Camfield, one of her old friends, had been at the Bay *en route* to Port Phillip and Sydney but to her disappointment had not been out to see her before his ship went on.² John and she were worried about the risks involved in their eighth-share in the family whaling concern and meant to get

¹ Was Jane's piano on board too? It was one of six shipped by Broadwood & Sons to Messrs. Henty and Company of Launceston per *Rhoda* 21.10.37; numbered 6725, it is now in the Warnambool Museum, back to back with a similar one formerly belonging to Governor La Trobe. Described by its makers as of the cabinet class, taller than its predecessor of the cottage class, it has a mahogany case, is of six octaves, and cost 70 guineas retail, and is stated to be the first piano ever to be brought into Victoria (Letter from Broadwood & Sons to the Curator, Warnambool Museum, 24.10.89, and their pamphlet *Adventures of Pianofortes*, pt. ii, pub. 1891).

² In the barque *Caledonia*, Captain Symers, taking eighteen prisoners from Madras to Sydney. She arrived at the bay 18.11.38 and sailed on 21.11.38, so Camfield could not have visited Merino Downs in the time.

out of it as soon as they could do so 'without offending or looking niggardly'. Stephen and Edward were gone to Adelaide in the *Sally Ann* with a cargo of potatoes, onions, carrots and turnips, etc.:¹ 'between you and I', said Eliza, falling into a popular grammatical trap, 'they are looking after the pence and letting the pounds take care of themselves'. 'They' had started the dairy and then done nothing more about it:

there are 200 head of cattle out here consequently lots of butter and cheese running about the plains and they are so dog in the manger they will neither allow us to spare a hand or two to build up the dairy and I would attend to it, or do it themselves. They sent the cattle out last summer, quite hot going, to set up the Australia Felix Merino Downs Grand Junction Branch Dairy Company, and they have never given them a thought since, but let them run all over the country. Such work my love has had this last month mustering them. He has built up a large stockyard of logs and they are tended out all day and brought in at nights. I get half a dozen of the quietest milked every morning to get a little butter to send dear Mama. We have only a large safe in my bedroom to keep it in. Dear John often milks himself, we are so short of hands and plenty to be had—

but, in the matter of hands, 'they' were 'stingy'. Having made her moan, Eliza said there was no good in grumbling; Stephen was coming up immediately after his return from Adelaide—he would see the position and do something to improve it. In a postscript she offered to send her brother a skin or two of some 'nice parrots' not to be found at the Swan. She herself wants all the chit-chat of the Swan and a few seeds of the Multiflora rose.

Plainly, Eliza was dispirited, probably all the more because Mrs. Stephen Henty, at the Bay, now had a daughter as well as a son.² But the resentful tone of the letter seems to reflect, not just Eliza's own mood of the moment, but the attitude of her husband himself. If John had been content Eliza would not have been aggrieved. Through the grumbling of Eliza it is possible

¹ The *Sally Ann* carried also six bullocks and two bulls. She sailed from Portland 3.4.39.

² Born 25.3.39. Mrs. Henty had evidently preferred to have her baby on the mainland, for she had returned from Launceston in the *Sally Ann* only one week before. A family story concerning the arrival of one of her babies says that Stephen paid a Launceston doctor a large fee to cross to the Bay to be ready to attend his wife at the appropriate time, but that Mrs. Henty, catching sight of the doctor from the window, declared she did not like the look of him and, fee notwithstanding, preferred to do with none.

to conjure the ghostly resentments of the past, to see John as the odd-man-out of the family, the only one who failed to measure up to the family standard of effort and of success. This impression of John, based on evidence now elusive, survives to the present, together with a whisper of hurt feelings and, faint but still there, a hint that despite everything John possessed an undefeatable charm.

Eliza's next letter, written to her brother Francis in November 1839, has more vigour and fewer complaints. Merino Downs was flourishing, although, as will be seen later, recent government moves were causing anxiety among the Hentys as to their hold on any of their land. Shearing was held up by cold tempestuous rain, but prospects were good:

we hope to shear for the concern out here 180 bales of wool 240 lbs in each which will be no trifling job to sort and pack. Dear John has to be at it every day that is fine enough to shear. . . . We have 8 acres of wheat nearly all out in ear and a splendid crop, I fear these hailstorms will do it no good but it will secure us plenty of potatoes and tobacco we cannot sow either very well until August on account of the frosts. . . . We have a great treat of green gooseberries, this is the first year the trees have borne, in fact some of them were only cuttings last season, but they are so loaded with fruit that the branches beat into the ground. There is also a good prospect of raspberries. We have a great deal of comfort in our garden now as it is nearly all done round with a 6 foot fence. My flowers look very gay, roses in abundance.

Eliza gives a first hint of Van Diemen's Land's hard times to come—approaching and inevitable but still a year or so ahead. The hint comes apropos of a sister married recently in Launceston to one Bolger, an auctioneer's clerk, a man of whom Eliza does not approve;¹ she 'suspects' that he has

¹ According to Camfield, who was in Launceston at the time of the wedding (Sept.–Nov. 1838) Bolger was formerly at the Swan and the engagement had been a long one. Of Eliza's brothers and sisters,

Susan b. 1809 (?) d. 29.8.35;

Anna Maria m. — Bolger, 1838;

Francis b. 1812 d. 1879 m. Elizabeth Caroline, d. of William and Eliza Shaw;

George Munro m. Elizabeth McDermott 3.5.56;

Edward Goldsmith m. Susan Jane Sutherland 21.5.56;

Charlotte Marian b. 1815 d. 1874 m. G. F. Stone 6.9.38;

Jane d. (?) 1838;

Thomas b. 1826 d. 1882 m. Mary Georgina Guerin;

John b. 1827 d. 1891 m. Emily Graham Perry.

(*W.A. Archives*, Canon Henn's Notes.)

put down his gig and tandem, and if not he ought to have, for

Launceston is such an expensive place that it would require a good fortune to keep horses in the town. Everything there is enormously dear and such distress among the poor that subscriptions have been got up to supply them with bread, and yet the men we have engaged to come over here after a little while get fat and saucy and more dainty in their eating than we are, forgetting all the starvation. It would do them good to go to the Swan for a while.

Before her marriage Eliza had evidently been given to writing verse. 'In your last letter, dear Francis', she wrote,

you ask me to send you a piece of poetry for your album. I am sorry to disappoint you but The Muses and I are no longer the intimate friends we used to be in the days of my spinstership. I have now other occupations, my house to regulate, my husband to keep in order and the servants to scold, baby clothes to prepare, the chickens to feed, young ducks to contemplate, my garden to look to and sundry other things too numerous to insert. Had I known you would have cared about my productions I should have left you all my rubbish but I shall keep it for you till please God we meet. I have often thought of making a bonfire of them.

She had not, however, done so: author-like, she loved them too well.

Despite Eliza's evident nostalgia for the more irresponsible days of single bliss there is proof that she was at this time an accomplished housewife and a hostess of skill and charm, possessed of a tongue that could soothe, not merely sting. Her letter does not mention the visit paid about this time by the overlander George Hamilton, but Hamilton's own memories of Merino Downs and its owners were vivid even after many years, and are recorded in print. Overlanding 350 head of mixed cattle from Melbourne to Adelaide was no easy task, with men as undisciplined as the cattle and conditions as uncomfortable as rain and wind could make them. Hamilton, like Hack, followed the prevailing fashion that allowed young gentlemen, quite correctly dressed in the towns, to look like ruffians while adventuring in the bush; so he added to the discomforts of travel by letting his boots go uncleaned, his chin unshaved and his hair uncut. At last, in fine weather, he brought his men and

beasts to the valley of the Wannon and came unexpectedly on Merino Downs. The country, he wrote, had been occupied for some time by Mr. Henty, of Portland Bay, who had placed a herd of cattle on it. Through this ran a river, then called the Wonnon, but which I believe has since my visit changed its name. We were all delighted at having arrived in so beautiful a country and looked forward with much pleasure to the enjoyment of travelling through it. About one o'clock post meridian, I saw, most prettily situated on the side of a gently sloping hill, a neat hut, or rather cottage—for although it was built of gum slabs, yet it was so very neatly put together, and being supplied with glass windows and cedar doors, it rose above the class of huts and entered into that of cottages. The scarlet kennedia and the purple hardenbergia climbed over the verandah, and gave a most enchanting aspect to the place. On riding up to the door Mr. Henty came forward, and, giving me a hearty welcome, asked me to dismount and come in. Having given my horse to a man he sent to me, I entered one of the prettiest rooms I ever recollect seeing—it was carpeted, curtained, and looked the very picture of neatness and comfort. As I entered, an inner door opened, and a lady—young, pretty, in every way in keeping with her surroundings—walked, or rather glided, into the room. Mr. Henty introduced her as his wife. Astonished, bashful, and blushing, like a common clown, I stood before her, unable to say anything. The circumstances of meeting in the wilderness with this fairy-like habitation and this fairy-like inhabitant had taken me quite aback, and I felt 'de trop' in such a place and in such company. My grandfather Adam was ashamed of his nakedness; I was ashamed of my clothing. Looking down I beheld my dirty, ugly, mis-shapen boots, and I was ashamed of my feet. My torn and dirty travel-stained blue serge shirt, together with my dirty red comforter, filled me with shame. I was relieved from my embarrassments by Mr. Henty telling me that dinner was ready, and if I would like to wash my hands I had better follow him into a room where there was water, soap, and all the requirements for making myself comfortable. *Wash my hands* indeed! What was I to do with my feet, and my boots, and my general clothing? Wash my hands! It appeared a farce to wash my hands only when I was so supremely dirty and ragged. As I followed my host into a small, neat dressing room, I looked into a looking glass, and saw what appeared to me to be the portrait of the first ruffian who comes on the stage to commit some horrid murder. There in the glass was a face not very clean, hirsute with a growing beard, the hair long disordered and unkempt, the very picture of a ragamuffin. However, after washing

face and hands, and struggling with a comb and brush to get my hair into some sort of order, I returned to the room, and we then sat down to an excellent dinner. My hostess by her tact and judgment had managed to restore to me some sort of confidence, and I was able to talk.

After dinner we all walked out, and wandered about the grounds. There was something so charming in finding in the midst of the wilderness such a sweet retreat as this was, that I could not help expressing my delight in beholding it. Both husband and wife responded to my feeling, and expressed themselves as quite contented and happy. Many years have glided into the past since then, and the career of my kind entertainers has never been revealed to me, but I hope that the happiness they then enjoyed lasted long, and remained with them through life.¹

It had not lasted: many years before Hamilton wrote these words, declining health and fortune had taken John Henty and his wife far from Merino Downs.

¹ George Hamilton, *A Journey from Port Phillip to South Australia in 1839* (Adelaide, 1879). Hamilton does not say which of the Hentys was his host, but at that date and place it could only have been John.

THE BARQUE CHILDREN

ONE of the vessels belonging to James Henty & Company at this time was the barque *Children*, an overseas and coastal trader of 255 tons. In November 1838, under the command of Captain H. Browne, brother of the Rev. W. H. Browne of St. John's parish church, she had returned to Launceston from England, completing the round voyage—out with wool and oil and back with merchandise for the colony—in the unusually short time of ten months and four days.¹ After discharging her cargo it was announced that she was engaged to trade between Launceston and South Australia² and in January she was anchored in the Tamar loading for her next trip. The process of loading was watched from her quarter-deck by James Henty's son Henry, now six years old. Row-boats brought the sheep from the shore, 1,500 of them;³ the cattle were swum out and hoisted aboard by tackle attached to their horns and one leg—the prevailing method, Henry knew, but noting the beasts' distress he thought it rather cruel.⁴ There were a few passengers, among them four shepherds, two families—a Mr. and Mrs. Cordey with a boy and four younger children and a Mr. and Mrs. Thompson with four more; and there was Henry's uncle, Sam Bryan. The vessel got away on 11 January in misty weather; it grew rough, and the mate, Mr. Gay, being sea-sick and off-duty most of each day, after clearing the Heads Captain Browne did not go to his bunk. On the 13th she was approaching the vicinity of Portland Bay, with the Lady Julia Percy Islands in sight. A gale sprang up, and Captain Browne decided to try to make the Bay if it continued to blow. Frank at the Bay was keeping a lookout, expecting to see the barque pass; on the 14th he recorded in the journal that in the afternoon the *Sally Ann* beat into the bay in a gale of wind. In this strong blow from the north-west and in thick weather Captain Browne did not attempt the bay but stood off and on the land. Next day the gale increased to what Frank described as 'a perfect hurricane'.

¹ *Laun. Adv.* 22.11.38.

³ The number is given by *Learmonth*, p. 59.

² *Ibid.* 13.12 38.

⁴ H. Henty's notes.

On both the 14th and 15th the *Children's* noon observations were unsatisfactory; but at nine o'clock on the night of the 15th Captain Browne reckoned he was a hundred miles from land and could safely leave the vessel—close-hauled and heading N.N.W. at three knots—to the second mate Mr. Wentworth, whose watch it was, while he himself took some sleep. Two hours later he was roused by a cry of '*Breakers!*' and rushing on deck with the mate found the ship amongst huge waves that pounded the base of a high and overhanging cliff. Almost at once the sweeping seas broke her in half. The stern went, and the thirty-eight people—passengers and crew—crowded together on the fo'c'sle in the dark and uproar of wind and sea: then the fo'c'sle went, and that was the end.¹

At daylight next morning the survivors found they were twenty-two, somehow on shore and alive. Sixteen were missing: the captain was gone—he had been seen trying to swim a line ashore; Wentworth, the second mate, was gone too, and three seamen and one of the shepherds, also Mrs. Cordey and her four younger children, and the four children belonging to the man Thompson and his wife, who were themselves both saved. Some of the dead lay on the beach, washed ashore together with the drowned sheep and cattle, while, adding terror to the anguish of that morning, invisible natives hallooed on the cliffs above. Many of the survivors were injured, among them Sam Bryan; when the *Children's* decks stove, the anchor had fallen, jamming him by one foot and entangling him in ropes. He had torn his foot free, wrenching off the top joints of three of his toes; some one cut the ropes and he found himself in the water grasping at a barrel—uselessly, for it rolled under his hands. Next, he was on the beach, bruised, exhausted, and in great pain. A few among the people were able to bury the bodies, as well as it could be done in the sand, and to make the injured as comfortable as was possible; they laid Sam on a bed of ferns and with a common knife somebody amputated one of his torn toes. Later, the shouts of natives having ceased, one man climbed to the cliff-top to reconnoitre and found them gone; he returned with a fire-stick that had been dropped, a treasure that meant warmth and the means to dry the ship's biscuit washed up by the waves.

Where exactly they were on that horrifying coast of rock-

¹ *Laun. Adv.* 21.2.39.

footed cliff and waste stretches of sand, nobody knew: later, the site of the wreck was fixed at a point about seventy miles to the east of Portland Bay; at the time of the wreck it had no name, but after a few years was known as Childers Cove.¹ Wherever they were, help had somehow to be fetched. A party set off eastwards for Port Phillip, a hopeless venture abandoned after a few days, when another party started westwards, aiming for Griffiths's whaling station at Port Fairy. More than thirty miles of unknown country lay between them and help, but the station was reached. Campbell, its manager, at once started off for the scene of the wreck, first dispatching a man on horseback to get help from Portland Bay, forty-six miles farther on. The messenger was Tom Clark, one of Edward's own hands in the first year of the settlement; the track he rode to the Bay must by now have been well defined.

In January Stephen was away, and his wife too. On the 27th, a Sunday, Edward and Frank had been out looking for some stray bullocks and came back to find Clark there with 'the disastrous news'. They 'immediately prepared and started off the dray horse cart and 4 men, Edward and Clark following a few hours later on horseback'.² Edward reached the scene of the wreck on the 28th and on Monday, 4 February, he 'returned with 18 of the shipwrecked people', all now sufferers from exposure as well as mental and physical shock. Unexpectedly, they now had skilled attention, for in Edward's absence a vessel, the *Socrates*, had arrived from Kangaroo Island with a surgeon on board; this was Mr. Lovell Byass,³ an old Worthing acquaintance of the Hentys who was to remain as medical attendant to their establishment at the Bay.

¹ This is the distance given in *Laun. Adv.* 21.2.39 and by the Hentys in their pamphlet published in 1841. That mileage—70—disproves a belief that the wreck was at Flinders' 'bold projection' (*Learmonth*, p. 59), 93 miles from Portland Bay, or at Moonlight Head, as Henry Henty states, 24 miles still farther east of the Bay. The name Childers Cove is printed on G. D. Smythe's map (1847) and is thought by some to be a corruption of 'Children'.

² Journal, entry by Frank Henty.

³ Byass (1811-74) was one of eight brothers trained to follow their father and grandfather in the medical profession and had emigrated with his wife to Kangaroo Island, under contract to the South Australian Company. Their first child was born and died on the island (*Learmonth*, pp. 108-9). They arrived at Portland Bay in Henry Reed's *Socrates*, 31.1.39. In March of that year his house, Prospect Cottage, was begun by one of Henty's men (journal, 27.3.39) and being erected in a position afterwards part of 'the public street' Stephen Henty had to build him another.

On the 6th, 'Mr. Bryan', says Frank, 'went through the operation of having the tops of three toes taken off by Mr. Byass'; Sam was to walk with a slight limp for the rest of his life. On the 8th the shipwrecked people, all except Bryan, went on board the *Socrates* and sailed next day for Launceston via Port Fairy, where perhaps they picked up the three who had not come on with the others to Portland Bay; on the 17th Bryan was well enough to follow in the *Sally Ann*, with Mr. Byass to care for him on the way.

Meantime anxiety was growing in Launceston, for the *Children* had been gone more than a month and should have been back, or heard of, before now. One morning—it was 19 February—Henry was with his father watching a vessel work her way up the river as far as the bar. They recognized her as the familiar *Socrates* and saw from the signal at her topmast that she had come from Portland Bay. A boat put off from her and was pulling towards them when Henry saw his father suddenly go white: James had recognized the steersman as Gay, the *Children's* first mate. Rushing to the water's edge, jumping a fence as he ran, he called 'Gay, Gay—*where's the Captain?*' Henry, left behind, could not hear the answer, but he saw Mr. Gay burst into tears.

In November 1951 gales assaulted the southern Victorian beaches and at Childers Cove, where the *Children* had gone to pieces, the driving winds lifted the sand, exposing some long-buried bones. These were submitted to the government pathologist, who happens also to be an historian of Australia's early days, and they were identified by him as parts of the skeletons of two adults in their late twenties and a child of about five. Found close to the bones was a hand-forged copper nail such as was in use in the century's first thirty years. After close examination of all the evidence and the rejection of other possibilities, the conclusion was that these were almost certainly relics of the wreck of 1839:¹ from storms in Bass Strait, after more than a century had emerged a mute reminder of that night when, through human error and the violence of the sea, the barque *Children* and the lives, loves, and hopes of her company were brought suddenly to an end.

¹ Information from Dr. K. McC. Bowden, Victorian Government Pathologist, author of *George Bass*, O.U.P., Melbourne, 1952.

A FAITHFUL SAMPLE

IT is good to think of old Thomas Henty wandering round Portland Bay on that visit in the autumn of 1838, poking here and there, looking at the stock and the crops and giving his advice, hearing about prospects at Merino Downs and the expectations of the coming season's whaling at the Bay. A year later he was still taking an active part in Launceston affairs, acting again as senior steward at the races¹—where all the winning horses were the produce of his own importations—and moving resolutions at the public meeting called in consequence of the British Government's decision to end assignment of convicts in Van Diemen's Land and to end transportation itself to New South Wales.² But the winter of 1839 brought on the repeated attacks of inflammation of the throat from which Thomas died on 25 October, towards the end of his 65th year.

Thomas had made his will in March 1838, just before embarking in the *Sally Ann* on the always unpredictable waters of Bass Strait. He left Frances, his wife, £100, an annuity of £300, and the use during her lifetime of all his household effects—'Plate, Linen, Books, China, Pictures apparel and Furniture'—all at her decease to be divided equally between his seven sons and his daughter Jane. Also equally to each of these he bequeathed all the real estate 'which I am now or (feeling myself entitled to a grant from Her Majesty's Government) may hereafter become possessed of . . .'. It was his wish that his executors, James, Charles, and William

¹ *Laun. Adv.* 1.3.38.

² *Ibid.* 28.3.39. James and Charles, like most of the 'not less than two hundred of our most respectable colonists' present disturbed at the proceedings of the English committee of inquiry, were doubtless concerned with the economic effects to be expected from the withdrawal of free labour. William was not present with his brothers, having perhaps been convinced of the social evils of assignment by ship-board conversations with Captain Maconochie, the man largely responsible for the recommendation of the committee that the system be abolished (*K. Fitzpatrick*, pp. 222, 228). Later, in the affairs of the Launceston Mechanics Institute (minutes, in the Launceston Public Library) William was to be closely associated with the Rev. John West, chief figure in the citizens' anti-transportation movement. Transportation did not cease until 1853.

should continue for Seven years after my decease on Account and at the risk of my Estate my Flock of Merino Sheep which have been a favorite with me through life which have never been beaten and the name of which after my decease may be of some credit to my family also I desire that they should continue in the same manner and for the same period my Stud of thorough bred Horses which I have been used to call by the name of the Egremont Stud. . . .¹

In Launceston, the death of Thomas Henty was greatly regretted, for he had qualities that earned him both affection and respect. The rival newspapers united in his praise; ministers of different religious denominations stood together at his grave. There was an impressive attendance at his funeral; 'notwithstanding the absence of an Invitation to attend', his coffin was followed by

a vast train of mourners—comprising all the leading settlers this side of the colony—the military and civil officers—and the tradesmen of the town; all equally anxious to manifest their respect for the memory of the deceased, and the family of which he was the revered head. . . . Too nobly proud to associate himself with petty party differences he lived a faithful sample of the English Country Gentleman.²

'Unfortunately', wrote Mrs. William Henty in a long chronicle to her sister Bessie,

James and Edward were away the latter part of Mr. Henty's illness and of all the sons there were only Charles and William to attend the funeral . . . very patient and tranquil was he to the last. Poor Mother is quite as cheerful as we could wish and pretty well; she wished us all to put on deep mourning, all her daughters alike in bombazine and crape.³

Soon after his arrival in 1837 William had begun practising in partnership with a well-known solicitor, Mr. William Gleadow, and appears to have had a busy professional life. In their first Launceston year Matilda had had another child, a boy they called Camfield who lived only six months; their daughter Mary was not born until August 1844. Meantime they lived, somewhat anxiously, for each other, the family interests and the activities of their church and other groups. William had the civic spirit of his family and, usually with one or other

¹ Copy of the will among *Henty Family Papers*.

² *Corn. Chron.* and *Laun. Adv.* 7.11.39.

³ *Camfield*.

of his brothers, shared in the work of founding various of Launceston's institutions—the Bible Society, the Mechanics Institute, the Horticultural Society (with Charles), the Grammar School (with James). At the time of Matilda's letter she and William were living at No. 11 Henty Street, and had just built an additional room; Mrs. Thomas Henty, anxious to see it, had been up for the first time to drink tea with them. The room, said Matilda, was 'the very nicest in the Colony, but not fine at all, only so nice and large and pleasant looking', with Bessie's dear old piano and her father's portrait, and two pretty French windows leading into the garden; such a pretty garden with almost as much fruit in it as there had been at Burrswood, and quite as many nesting birds—

such pretty petts that do not mind our standing to look at them, they build here at the end of the boughs. We have the Robin with a much redder breast than ours in England it is more like a red waistcoat.

There was a nice verandah, and she and William had planted creepers to the posts, one or two of them white jasmines much prized by Matilda but apt not to thrive. The large garden took up a great deal of time, so that as regards needlework Matilda sometimes got very idle for a long time together, but lately she had made 'two frocks, a black silk and a brown cotton one besides mending myself up a little'.

I am become a much more stirring person lately for we are seldom without someone staying with us—we have Edward and Mr. Butler [?] he has been staying here a long time. I am obliged to scurry about and find I don't like it any better than I used having a lot of people about for my darling and I are very happy when we are by ourselves and I often get into great straits about my little dinners and all my little matters and want you here sadly to torment by asking you a thousand things.

Matilda, who took prizes for her preserves at the Horticultural Society's Show, was also

in great repute for making sponge cakes I make them better than Jane Bryan or anyone out here and William is so fond of them that I make him one every week. I am a great baker in my way, I have a nice little oven, but we buy our own bread.

They had at present only two servants, an Irishman and his wife they had hired a year ago—

not good servants at all, both being dirty and untidy in their habits so that sometimes we get into terrible trouble having two people staying in the house and I do not think I was ever very much calculated for a stirring housekeeper. I often wish I could do things with greater ease to myself but we manage as well as we can and I think you would be amused to see me trotting about.

A drawing-room and good service had always been part of the gentle Matilda's life: small wonder that her brother Henry, jolted from that world himself, had discouraged his sisters from venturing to join him at the Swan.

William, said his wife, was very much occupied at the office now;

I am afraid he will not be able to stand such close confinement it quite distresses me to see him come home so tired as he does frequently of an evening. He is become a great gardener and by getting up pretty early he gets a little done in the mornings.

Launceston Sundays, Matilda said, were very like English Sundays:

We still spend our Sunday very pleasantly we manage to get up early and go to school and then to Church and then home to dinner and then off to school again and then we have our tea and to Church in the evening. They are busy days but very pleasant days because I have William with me all day.

Before finishing her letter, Matilda had some frivolities to report.

We are getting to be quite dissipated folks this is the 20th and since writing the above we have had the Jefferies [Archdeacon Jeffery and his wife] of Bombay to dine with us and yesterday we were asked to meet them at Mrs. Eddie's and then we made him speak in the evening at the Infant School upon the temperance society. We were very pleased at having him he is a nice little man not at all like our Archdeacon nor can you fancy he is an Archdeacon at all he is not dignified enough in his manner. . . .

Matilda handed her letter over to William, warning Bessie not to be disappointed if the busy man could find no time to add to it. William, a wifely pistol to his head, managed a postscript, vowing that nothing would give him more pleasure than to be free to write to Bessie at length, but

My Partner is in the country and we have lost a clerk and we are

busy preparing for our annual meeting of the Sunday School children and last night I had to go about the Town collecting for the Bible Society so that every day I am a busy man but thank God am blessed with good health to get through very fairly.

Thomas's death, according to Matilda, was not unexpected. Then how did it come about that James, and Edward with him, left Van Diemen's Land at such a time? It was because their land problem had become urgent once more: were they squatters, with no rights, as the authorities ruled, or were they authorized settlers, on the word of Lord Aberdeen, as the Hentys themselves believed and continued to maintain? Worry over this question is said by his descendants to have contributed to Henty's death; even if there is no written evidence to bear this out, it cannot be doubted that during his illness the security of his family must have been the subject uppermost in his mind. A definite threat to their lands at the Bay had lately arisen; no longer capable of challenging it himself, he must, it seems, have deputed James and Edward to act for him even though that took them out of the island, and perhaps for ever beyond his ken.

In September 1836, as has been told, Bourke had received the King's commands to allow the occupation of Port Phillip; the resistance of Downing Street, on which he had commented to Arthur, had been finally overcome. Early in 1837 Bourke had visited the settlement of huts and tents on the Yarra and named it Melbourne after the Prime Minister; at the request of the residents and pending the King's permission, he called the locality—the future 'county'—Bourke, after himself.¹ Blocks of land in the 'town', already surveyed, were put up for sale and after this the rivals Batman and Fawkner and all the

¹ *I H.R.A.*, vol. xviii, pp. 379–81, 780. In 1948 the Federal Government of the day permitted the destruction of this small tribute to one of Australia's outstanding men. New electoral boundaries having become necessary, counties had to be divided and additional names found; the changes were suggested by the chief electoral officer, did not come before Parliament, and apparently found no critics among members who saw the proposed names (*Hansard Reports*, Aug. 1948). The divided Bourke, named as Victoria's first county more than a century before, now became BURKE and Wills, commemorating two explorers whose ill-planned and ill-led adventure of the sixties had met its inevitable disastrous end. Thus, somebody's trivial device—the removal of the O from the county's name—tampered with history and pushed still farther into oblivion one who for his liberal outlook and actions deserves instead to be widely known.

other invaders from Van Diemen's Land were there by right of purchase. Next year (1 July 1838) the sheep-runs in the district were made available by grazing licences, as in other non-located areas of New South Wales: now all the sheepmen, from Van Diemen's Land or across the Murray or direct from the United Kingdom, were entitled for a fee of £10 a year to a tenure of the lands they chose, and only the Government could turn them out. But Portland Bay and the interior were to remain outside the land-laws, unnoticed officially in any way, for two more years.¹

The first official interference with the Bay took place early in 1839, some months before Thomas Henty's death. The reason for the Government's sudden awakening to the existence of the settlement that was now more than four years old has not, it is believed, been stated in print before. It was undoubtedly due, as the records show, to two letters received by the Governor charging the Messrs. Henty, and Edward in particular, with deliberately massacring blacks. The letters, written from Launceston late in February and signed G. C. Collier, M.D., asserted that there had been interference with native women by undesirable 'menials', 'expirees' employed as herdsmen by the Hentys; they told of the murder of a hut-keeper, killed by the blacks in revenge for atrocities, and described the subsequent descent of Edward Henty into the interior with fourteen of his men all armed, and the shooting of a number of natives, women as well as men. Collier claimed to have spent ten months in the interior with Mr. Samuel Winter, whose benevolent behaviour to the natives he contrasted with the atrocious conduct of the Messrs. Henty and their hands. He added that he was on the eve of sailing for England and was prepared to lay before the Secretary of State the facts concerning conditions at Portland Bay. Sir George Gipps, Bourke's successor, apparently had reason to suspect his informer of using an assumed name and of claiming falsely to be a qualified medical man; but even so the charges were too specific and serious to be ignored. At once, on 11 March, even before trying—vainly, as it seems—to establish Collier's true identity, Gipps gave orders for the immediate investigation of affairs at the Bay. He ordered copies

¹ The successive land settlement laws and regulations for N.S.W. from 1827-62 are set out by Billis & Kenyon, *Pastures New*, pp. 2-13.

of Collier's letters to be sent to Captain Foster Fyans, the resident magistrate at Geelong,

with directions to proceed with as many mounted Policemen as he can conveniently collect to Portland Bay.

In the event of Murders having been committed he must endeavour to apprehend the perpetrators of them—and he will make a general report on the state of the district.¹

A rough journey and a difficult task lay ahead of Fyans: what sort of place did he expect to find? For seven months of the year Portland Bay was a mere village of about fifty people, a farming centre and a resort of vessels, a port for goods travelling to and from the inland stations of the Hentys, their neighbour Sam Winter of Spring Valley² and latterly of the Wedge Brothers of the Grange. But between May and September, the whaling season, the population swelled to near three hundred and changed its character in more ways than one: the quiet of the Bay was banished, and there was nobody with authority to keep order among the turbulent whalers or to deal with suspected runaways who appeared from the Major's track for a spell of wages and rations, riding off again into the bush on other men's horses when it suited them to leave.

It was in June, in the middle of the whaling season, that Captain Fyans arrived from Geelong. With him were a surveyor, a chainman, and three mounted police. The last thirteen days of their journey, by an untried route, took them into a country of coastal scrub and stony ridges, their way blocked by small but impassable rivers and troubled by tribes of agitated blacks. On arrival they were hungry, exhausted, and almost without shoes. Three days at the Bay—days of wintry winds and rain and a violent surf on the blubber-strewn beach—gave Fyans plenty to report to the Colonial Secretary. Writing informally

¹ *M.L.* Entries in the journal during Nov. 1838–Jan. 1839 record Collier's movements between the interior, the Bay and Launceston, his final departure from the mainland being in the *Sally Ann*, 17.1.39. Captain Foster Fyans, 4th King's Own, arr. Sydney 1833, aged forty-three; held positions at Norfolk Island and Moreton Bay before being appointed to Geelong in 1837; in 1840 appointed Commandant of Border Police and Commissioner of Crown Lands (notes by Fyans, *M.L.*). Fyansford, near Geelong, commemorates his name. An unsigned statement by him is included in *Letters from Victorian Pioneers*.

² The property of the Winter Cooke family and known for many years past as Murndal. The original cottage, brought from England via V.D.L. and erected at Portland Bay in 1839, is preserved at Murndal (*Learmonth*, pp. 109–10).

and somewhat incoherently from 'a Miserable Hut without any convenience', he praised the land and the harbour, condemned the lower order of inhabitants and urged speedy government action to take control. The population, he said,

amounts to about 293 Europeans at the present time, and by a letter which Mr. Henty showed me there are 30 families expected from England, and others from V.D. Land in the course of the year, from the appearance of the men about the place, I conclude they are a bad lot of ruffians—and quite independent . . . every fellow appears the Master and no doubt numerous bad, and improper acts, have been committed and hid from us—I have spoken to many of the men here—almost without receiving a civil reply—to them we are all on a par—equality is the order of the day. . . . There must be a Police Magistrate appointed, with 3 constables, and 3 mounted Police—which would be the means of checking the absconders—and also keeping the community in decent order for if allowed to go on in their present state—I fear all will not end well. The Magistrate could on occasions visit Adelaide where Mr. Henty informs me he has met with many of the Runaways who passed here—Fahey and Davis are supposed to be Runaways from Sydney—they remained near Mr. Henty's for some months—and departed for Adelaide—the day they left here, two horses were taken from Mr. Henty's. Mr. Henty went to Adelaide, to the Chief of Police, without any satisfaction—the man Fahey is living with a Mr. Hack—who has several others—at least four—in his employ.

The Bay appears a very fair one and perfectly safe, and only one accident by loss since 1834—Mr. Henty informs me that almost weekly ships come in—and that 15 and more Vessels have been here at one time. As to the land, I cannot speak too highly of it, and the produce of Corn, Potatoes, and vegetables, exceed anything I have ever met with—many Potatoes weighing $3\frac{3}{4}$ lbs—A Schooner is now loading in the Bay with Potatoes, Carrots, Parsnips and Turnips for Adelaide—where already a market is found—£25 one ton of Potatoes. . . . From the vast tracts of fine country well-watered—fit for any purpose, either agriculture or pasture, and from the general features of this fertile plain, I can have no doubt of it becoming ere long a most valuable part of the Colony. The grounds about Melbourne are good, but not to be compared to this part . . . in my opinion Portland Bay will be of Vast Consideration.

Mr. Henty I observe has fenced in a vast quantity of ground close on the Bay and is continuing to do so. I have recommended him to desist—as he is now on the Land where if a Town is formed it will be required for the purpose—I am of the opinion that he imagines

that any portion he fences, that he will be entitled to keep, and speaks of a promise from the Duke of Richmond—and also of an exchange of land at Swan River for the present Settlement—in fact as far as I can learn in conversation the family residing here conclude that the Land occupied by them is their own.¹

As to this, Fyans wrote to the Governor, he 'found little benefit in endeavouring to argue the point, and nothing will convince them until the Government take the place'.²

For the post of magistrate, needing someone willing to take to the bush for a week or a month at a time, 'gentlemen prospectors with large families' were 'of no earthly use'; for them, a day's ride was a consideration, 'an *important event*'. Nor were 'persons from Van Diemen's Land fit and proper persons to receive any compliment from our Government'—a view asserted publicly by Fyans and, despite an apology, said to have 'secured him the chance of a duel once at least a week as long as he may live'.³ Fyans was, in fact, eager to obtain the appointment himself.

Fyans took a number of depositions at the settlement and also 'read over carefully Mr. Henty's journal of all acts committed since 1834 to the present time'. The party was to proceed inland next day to Henty's and Winter's stations, a ride of fifty-five miles 'into Australia Felix—Major Mitchell's Country—so well known'. Winter, Fyans was informed, was a constant employer of runaways; but there and at Henty's station he would 'investigate according to your directions, and which shall be done as successfully as I can, and with every justice to all concerned'. Fyans promised the Colonial Secretary a full report, to be sent on his return across country to Geelong. Unfortunately, this has not been found; but the fact that official appointments were given not long after to both Edward and Stephen Henty is conclusive proof that Governor Gipps—no friend to squatters—was fully satisfied that Collier's sensational charges, so far as the Hentys were concerned, were false. Nor apparently was he disturbed by the general condition of affairs at the Bay as described by Fyans. Governor Bourke had favoured dispersion 'where sheep were concerned'; Gipps,

¹ Fyans to Deas Thomson, 13.6.39 (*M.L.*).

² Fyans to Gipps, 1.7.39 (*M.L.*).

³ LaTrobe to Gipps, private letter, 4.4.40 (*Melb. Arch.*).

dispersion's declared opponent, in no hurry to recognize the handful of sheepmen at dispersion's farthest point, Portland Bay, as yet took no action to set up government machinery for its control. But although the little settlement was to continue for a while longer without the magistracy that both Fyans and the questionable Collier had urged, its haphazard days were numbered, for Gipps decided to have the Bay surveyed for the future creation of a town.

Recently the Home Government had decided that the rapidly growing Port Phillip district was to be administered by an officer with the title of Superintendent, responsible only to the Governor of New South Wales. For anyone in the southern districts Charles Joseph LaTrobe, the man appointed, would henceforward be the channel through whom any representations to headquarters would have to be made.¹ Obviously, the Hentys felt it was desirable to lay their case before him in person—a case in their opinion greatly strengthened by the decision of the Home Government to pay compensation to the Port Phillip Association for the loss of the land they had claimed as their own: the choice of Henty emissaries—assuredly Thomas's choice—fell upon Edward and James.

Probably the decision to see LaTrobe was made when his appointment was first announced. News of his arrival in Sydney reached Launceston in August 1839, shortly after Thomas fell ill; but LaTrobe, new to colonial administration, was kept at headquarters for a few weeks' training and did not leave Sydney for Port Phillip until 10 September. Edward crossed from Portland to Launceston about the same time and James and he set sail for Melbourne in their own schooner *Eagle*, landing when LaTrobe had been in the settlement barely two weeks.

¹ Charles Joseph LaTrobe (1801–75), an Englishman of Swiss descent, educated originally to follow his father in the Moravian ministry; author and traveller in Europe, North America, and Mexico; in 1837 sent to the West Indies to report to the British Government on the education of the emancipated slaves; appointed to P. Ph. Dis., Feb., 1839. LaTrobe remained as Lieut. Governor when the District was separated from N.S.W. in 1851 and became the State of Victoria; he resigned in 1854 and retired to Litlington, Sussex. He was blind for some years before his death, 2.12.75. He was twice married and had one son and five daughters (*Serle*, who quotes an attractive description of LaTrobe from Washington Irving's *Tour of the Prairies*, in which LaTrobe was one of his companions). LaTrobe's years of administration were arduous and except in the beginning neither the man nor his work was popularly appreciated or understood.

In Sydney LaTrobe had been shown the framework of an organized colony more than fifty years old: here, in the infant Melbourne, he was confronted by the varied, small and urgent problems of a settlement aged less than four years from the first axe-blow. There exists a bare record of those October days, kept by LaTrobe himself in his crabbed and barely decipherable hand.¹ In the small crude house in Little Collins Street that was his temporary office² he made notes of his talks with the men carrying out the humble and important tasks of a new colony—notes of interviews with the clerk of works, the chief of police, the chief protector of aborigines, the clergy of different denominations, the customs officer, the surveyor, and so on. LaTrobe's instructions in theory endowed him with the powers of a lieutenant-governor, but in fact in most things Gipps remained paramount. Only in small domestic affairs was the power of decision LaTrobe's, such, for instance, as the need for fencing the cemetery, the transport of letters between the village of Melbourne, several miles up the winding river, and the still smaller village of Williamstown at the river's mouth; the choice of a site for Williamstown's light-house; the provision of rations for police-horses and of labour for building police-barracks; the prevention of indiscriminate wood-cutting and stone-breaking, at present done by anybody, anywhere. And, reminder to LaTrobe of the width of his domain, so ill-proportioned to the narrow extent of his powers, he received reports of the robbery of the overland mail to Sydney, of clashes between his mounted police and the Goulburn River blacks, and requests for supplies and instructions for Surveyor C. J. Tyers, about to leave for distant Portland Bay to lay out the proposed town.

The *Eagle* anchored off the Yarra on 15 October³ and James and Edward proceeded to Melbourne without delay. To avoid a boat journey of eight curving miles up the river to the town, they must have made their way there on foot, as was done by most ship arrivals, including His Honour the Superintendent.⁴ The track lay through two miles of tea-tree scrub and brought wayfarers to the river-bank at the Falls, opposite the town,

¹ No. 1 *Minute Book* (Melb. Arch.).

² '... in the house adjoining the offices of Messrs Baxter and Carrington!!!' (P. Ph. Gaz. 16.10.39).

³ P. Ph. Gaz. 16.10.39.

⁴ 1.10.39 (*Boys*, p. 98).

where they paid their threepence each to be put across by punt.¹ LaTrobe heard the Hentys' business that same day. The Messrs. Henty, he noted on the 15th, meant to send in their claim founded on 'some authority' from Lord Aberdeen: 'charged them to do so speedily', he added, and recommended to them the surveyor, Mr. Tyers, already started with his troopers and bullock-wagon on his long journey to the Bay.²

The *Eagle* left again for Van Diemen's Land on 24 October, but she was bound for Hobart Town with sheep³ and James and Edward chose another vessel, the barque *Arab*, sailing direct for Launceston. The *Arab* landed them on 11 November,⁴ ready to give their father a first-hand account of Melbourne, to tell him of the former Launceston identities met with in its streets, and to describe their reception by the handsome and courteous LaTrobe. But they arrived home to find that Thomas's 'excessive curiosity', his pride in his sons, his obstinate hopes for the family plan, were now stilled. Henceforward, James was the family's head.

¹ 'Garryowen', p. 499; *Westgarth*, p. 17.

² No. 1 *Minute Book* (Melb. Arch.).

³ *P. Ph. Gaz.* 26.10.39.

⁴ *Arab*, barque, 291 tons, Westmorland, master (*Laun. Adv.* 14.11.39).

THE GOVERNOR, THE COLONIAL OFFICE, AND A PROPER FENCE

‘**A** SURVEY party have arrived overland from Port Phillip’, wrote Eliza Henty from Merino Downs in November 1839; they were

to lay out a township at the bay and I hear they have taken in Stephen’s house garden and all the fenced ground in the very heart of where they have chosen to put the town. My opinion is that Govt. will take every bit away but it appears we have a letter from my Lord Aberdeen giving the Hentys all the land they should have fenced in. Now the great question is whether the Sydney Govt. will recognise that as a proper authority for it was on the strength of that all those expenses were entered into at the bay. If they do and give the land our fortune is made but if not we are done as thousands of pounds have been expended there in tilling, fencing and building etc. There is 25 acres of potatoes in besides corn and large grass paddocks fenced in. Our ships *Eagle* and *Minerva* are engaged for all the summer to bring sheep down for some people who are coming but who they are I do not know. We have not been at any building expense out here nor will we till the question is decided whether we are to have the land or not.

When Captain C. J. Tyers arrived with his assistant, T. S. Townsend, and party, the whalers had vanished, not to re-appear for some months, and according to a census with which he was ‘kindly furnished by Mr. Stephen Henty’ the total number of people at the bay was forty-one.¹ Of these, three were children, six were domestic servants, male and female, and twenty-two were farm labourers or stockmen; one other was Mary Pace, paying her sister Mrs. Stephen Henty a long visit

¹ Tyers’s *Account of Expedition, Sept. 1839–March 1840*, quoted by *Learmonth*, pp. 110–15 and 119–21, is now in the Mitchell Library. As well as laying out the town of Portland, Captain Tyers was to determine the true position of the 141st longitude, the boundary between New South Wales and South Australia, a question not finally settled (by appeal to the Privy Council) until 1914 (*House of Lords, Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, Law Reports, 1914*). *Learmonth*, pp. 259–63, summarizes the various steps towards settlement.

from the Swan,¹ and the remaining nine were Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Henty themselves, Mr. Byass the surgeon and his wife; Mr. Cecil Pybus Cooke, recently arrived from England via Van Diemen's Land bringing a wooden cottage and his wife, a sister of Sam Winter; Mr. Winter's partner (? Mervyn) Archdale, a brother, George Winter, and 'a Mr. Brown'. 'With respect to the settlers', Tyers reported to Sydney, 'I cannot but speak in the highest terms of them, more especially of Mr. Stephen Henty, who has shown a disposition to help us to the utmost in his power'. Helping strangers as well as neighbours was Stephen's way, and he was accustomed to being Portland's only provider and the nearest approach to a master of ceremonies the settlement could produce. So, though the presence of Tyers was a threat of things to come, when the Revenue Cutter *Pyramus* failed to arrive with the survey party's food, provisions were made available from Stephen's store; Stephen lent Tyers a new whale-boat and put part of *Sally Ann*'s crew at his disposal for the survey of the bay by sea; and Stephen's flagstaff was used as a trigonometrical point not only in surveying the Bay but in fixing the boundary between New South Wales and South Australia. No doubt, also, Tyers was given private hospitality by the man he had practically been deputed to dispossess.

Tyers had brought a copy of Fyan's report with him and could not agree with its unrestrained praise of the bay. Inland, indeed, where the Hentys had 20,000 sheep and 500 cattle, the country, he said, was described as equal to any in the world. At the bay, admittedly, there was a very good coastal strip, but it was only half a mile wide and beyond it were swamps, lagoons, and forest. This narrow strip he pronounced the only possible site for a town. It looked as though the Henty's forebodings, echoed by Eliza, were only too likely to be justified.

As was to be expected, the Hentys meant to fight, and fight

¹ Mary Pace arrived at the Bay in the *Sally Ann*, 29.5.39. She had followed her mother, brothers, and sisters from England; she it was who had travelled out to the Swan in the care of Captain Joseph Toby in the *Joshua Carroll* in 1837, sole female passenger, two others on board at sailing having had enough before anchoring at Deal, where to Mary's vexation they left the ship. At Fremantle she joined her mother in running a general store and hotel, her father, Captain Walter Pace, and two brothers being absent in Java and Bali (*W.A. Arch.* and copy of letter from Mary, Nov. 1837, among *Henty Family Papers*).

hard. Their first step had been the visit to Melbourne to see LaTrobe; their next was to submit their claims in Sydney to Governor Gipps. For this purpose James and his wife sailed from Launceston early in March in the brig *William*, arriving on the 14th and putting up at Petty's Hotel. James brought with him a memorial signed by himself on behalf of all the brothers and Samuel Bryan. Pride and anxiety warm its pages, which must be read if there is to be realization of what the Hentys had achieved and what they now stood to lose. The memorial also affords contemporary evidence, not available elsewhere, of the size and whereabouts of the holdings of the first settlers of the future State of Victoria. It states briefly the circumstances that decided them to begin farming at the bay; relates the rejection by the Colonial Office of the application of the late Mr. Thomas Henty for 20,000 acres there in lieu of his 83,000 at the Swan; and refers to the memorial with the same object submitted by James, through Lord Surry, to the Secretary of State, Aberdeen. It quotes fully Aberdeen's reply, and continues:

Mr. Thomas Henty although disappointed in not obtaining the absolute grant he sought considered the encouragement to carry on improvements at Portland Bay contained in this letter as of greater Value than his claims in Swan River. . . .

— Mr. Henty therefore in conjunction with your Memorialists made numerous shipments of Sheep and other Stock to Portland Bay.

Previous to the receipt of the Earl of Aberdeen's letter Four acres of Land only had been enclosed to secure the Stock as it was landed and no buildings had been erected, those of Your Memorialists who had preceded them having lived in Tents.

After the receipt of the above letter more land was enclosed and numerous buildings were erected and Two others of your Memorialists joined the Establishment and with their families suffered all the privations and difficulties which must unavoidably attend the foundation of a new Settlement.

The result of their labours and expenditure has been the occupation of Six Stations of which one is at Portland Bay, another fifteen miles distant at Cape Bridgewater, three at the open Country about sixty miles inland called 'Merino Downs' situate on the River Wannon near its junction with the Glenelg, and another station on the road there from Portland Bay (Mt. Eckersley).

They have erected Two considerable Houses at Portland Bay one

of them containing 12 Rooms and Two others at 'Merino Downs', all of a substantial build and also constructed the following buildings, viz. Nine Yards, Shed, large Barn Store Stable, Carpenters, Blacksmiths and Shoemakers Shops, Dairy and other buildings.

The Value of the Buildings fencing and other improvements that have been erected at Portland Bay exceeds the sum of Five Thousand Pounds, independent of the Fences and the Houses and buildings inland, which together with the building of Bridges the formation of Roads and other expenses and improvements cannot on the whole be estimated at less than from £8000 to £10,000.

They have fenced in 135 acres (as measured by the Government Surveyors) in one Paddock and smaller paddocks. Of the former 60 acres have been cleared and grubbed of Stumps, at an expense of not less than Twenty Five Pounds per acre and are now under crop.

They have three portions of about 40 acres, 15 acres and 10 acres respectively fenced in at the inland stations and surrounding the two farm Houses there.

From Portland Bay to the interior, they have with much labor and expense laid out and made an excellent road though the Country is very heavy and its difficulties such as could not have been encountered, except by a party comprizing great strength. This Road crosses three Rivers by the means of Bridges of their own erecting, which has made the road open and easily accessible to future settlers.

More fully to convey an impression of the value and importance of the improvements effected, it may be mentioned that large quantities of Stock of all kinds have been imported and that the number of Souls including a Medical Man and his Family is Males 46 Females 7 Total 53 and the average cost of each Laborer has been Sixty Pounds per annum. All the Labourers engaged from the commencement of the establishment have been free, with the exception of Two, one an Emancipist and the other a Ticket of Leave person, who passed themselves off as free, but on being discovered were brought back at Your Memorialists expense and delivered to the authorities in Van Diemen's Land.

Mr. Thomas Henty died in October, 1839, just as a prospect was beginning to open of remuneration for the sacrifices himself and family had made in bringing his plans to maturity.

In the meantime although not productive of private advantage his enterprize had opened up a Golden Mine to the Public.

By 'Golden Mine' was meant the sheep-runs around Port Phillip Bay—and here, in taking credit for inspiring the Batman-Fawkner excursions of 1835, the Memorialists assuredly claimed

too much. Encouraged by Thomas Henty's example, they continued,

other settlers from Van Diemen's Land explored the Country about Port Phillip and with their surplus Stock laid the foundation of that flourishing settlement and that which six years back was looked upon as a distant and barely possible contingency 'has by the enterprise of Your Memorialists become an actual and present certainty. Their labours have rendered a remote and unknown Bay a spot so coveted that the Government of the Colony has been called upon to throw it open to the Public and a Town has accordingly been marked out, embracing within its limits a great part of the improvements made by Your Memorialists at so great a labour and Expense.

Your Memorialists in consideration of the encouragement held out to them by Lord Aberdeen and of the practice of all Colonial Governments to allow remuneration to individuals for public improvements and of the first settlers at Port Phillip having obtained a remission to the amount of Seven Thousand Pounds although their improvements compared with those of Your Memorialists were next to nothing as they made no roads or bridges erected only trifling dwellings and cultivated no land are emboldened to request of Your Excellency a favourable and just consideration of their claims and submit either:

That they should obtain a Deed of Grant of all the land absolutely fenced in and occupied at Portland Bay, as provided for by the letter of Lord Aberdeen or should the Colonial Government consider that the obtaining of those lands is indispensable to the establishment of the Town, then That they should be allowed as remission money a sum equal to the value of the land, to be estimated at the average rate at which the first allotments may sell and that to this sum should be added the value of the buildings and improvements to be estimated by persons appointed on both sides or by some competent board.

That in the event of the first alternative being adopted then that some compensation by remission in the purchase of the Land should be given in consideration of the Bridges built, the roads made and the general improvements at the different stations consisting as before stated of buildings and fencing.

But should it be determined not to admit in any present arrangement a compensation for the improvements at the inland stations inasmuch as they are not to be at present interfered with and may be said to be as available to us Your Memorialists now as heretofore, still they would ask, that in the event of these fenced stations being thrown into the Market, they should be allowed either to purchase

them or the portions of Land on which they may be situate at the average price at which the Parish portions or allotments may sell.¹

The Governor and his Executive Council met on 26 March (1840) and rejected these claims. Regret was expressed that so much money had been spent before finding out the views of the Colonial Government;

for the Council neither considers Lord Aberdeen's letter as affording an encouragement for the proceedings of the Memorialists, nor, can they perceive any grounds on which this case is distinguishable from those of other unauthorized occupiers of Crown Lands in New South Wales who might with reason consider themselves unjustly dealt with, if this application should be entertained. . . .²

Probably an adverse decision was not unexpected, for James had provided himself in anticipation with a spare copy of the memorial for forwarding through Gipps to the Secretary of State. But before sending this to Gipps with a covering letter to Lord John Russell, James wrote to the Governor respectfully challenging the Council's interpretation of Aberdeen's letter and declaring the Hentys' 'undoubting faith' that the 'Noble Lord's successors in the office' would keep Aberdeen's promise. Before appealing to the present Secretary of State, wrote James, we would respectfully entreat His Excellency to state in what respect this case differs from that of the Port Phillip adventurers, as that and the principles on which it proceeded was what they chiefly relied upon in applying in the first instance to the Colonial Government.

This letter is endorsed by James 'Not sent'; after its preparation it appears from a note he made on an envelope that he obtained an interview with the Governor, and during that call he put his question to Gipps direct. How grimly cautious official answers have to be, if they are not to create trouble! There was Aberdeen, with his impulsive use of the palliatory, the fatal, words 'a proper fence'; and now Gipps, faced by James's question about the Port Phillip Association, was moved to speak of the bogus contract between the Association and the native chiefs and somehow managed to leave his questioner convinced that in the official view the Association, with that contract, had established a case for compensation while the Hentys, without

¹ *I H.R.A.*, vol. xx, pp. 88-92, and *Henty Family Papers*.

² *Council Minute Book (M.L.)*.

such a contract, had not. The letter from James to the Secretary of State, written after the interview and now missing, revealed this confusion to Gipps; but by then James had sailed from Sydney, or he might have received a second invitation to attend at Government House. In forwarding the memorial to Lord John Russell, Glenelg's successor at the Colonial Office, Gipps said he would have left the Hentys' claims without comment in the Minister's hands but that they had

(unintentionally I am willing to believe) in their letter to your Lordship greatly misrepresented a conversation which one of their body had with me when lately in Sydney.

I certainly said to Mr. Henty, that the principal difference between their case and that of the Port Phillip Association was that the Association had made a pretended purchase from the natives; but I never said, at least I certainly did not mean to say, that Mr. Henty's case would have been stronger, if there had been a pretended purchase from the Natives, for I distinctly told Mr. Henty that I held all such purchases to be null and void; and that the recognition of them in any way, would be likely to involve us in difficulties, especially at a time when we are about to declare the invalidity of any title to land acquired from the Natives of New Zealand. A reference to the case of the Port Phillip Association will show, that the compensation of £7000 granted to them, was obtained by the persevering efforts of their friends at home; and that it was stated by the Executive Council in their minute of 21 October, 1836, that the Council considered any compensation to the Association to be 'justifiable only under the express authority received from Her Majesty's Government'.¹

Obviously, given powerful *enough* 'friends at home', the Colonial Government might be required again to act against its convictions: a possibility of which James would have been well aware and indeed on which the Hentys based their hopes.

The incident of James's 'misrepresentation' at first disturbed Gipps; later, it angered him. For the Hentys, presumably in ignorance of the Governor's version, did not refer to it when stating their own in the pamphlet setting forth their claims on the Colonial Government, issued by them in 1841 for use by their agents and friends in London.² Towards the end of this

¹ *I H.R.A.*, vol. xx, pp. 593-4.

² Copy among *Henty Family Papers*; published London, 1841, by Orger & Meryon, 174 Fenchurch Street. Listed in *Ferguson*, vol. iii.

pamphlet a comparison was made between the treatment of the Hentys and of the 'party of adventurers' at Port Phillip, granted compensation to the amount of £7000. The statement continued:

In an interview which the Messrs Henty obtained with the Governor at Sydney, this precedent was pressed upon His Excellency's consideration. It was urged that, if compensation were given to those who had effected comparatively so little, it ought not to be refused to the claimants, whose expenditure was not only much greater, but had been applied largely in operations of public utility. In reply to this, however, his Excellency drew a distinction between the cases upon which he grounded the difference in the conduct of the Government. The Port Phillip adventurers, in return for a few blankets which they distributed, had obtained from the ignorant natives their mark to an instrument, purporting to be a contract for the purchase of the land. Totally unable to form even the simplest ideas of property, and wholly unconscious that there could be any right of property in themselves, the same natives, if required, for the same gift, would have sold them the whole territory of Australia. Yet this is seriously assumed as the substantial difference between the claims. For a handful of the flour which the Messrs Henty have distributed to the natives at Portland Bay, they could have obtained, at any time, and can still obtain, whatever conveyance of land they might desire. . . . [but] The Messrs Henty apprehend . . . that any attempt on their part to assert a title, derived from any written contract with natives who had no conception of its meaning, would expose them to the charge of designing to impose upon the Government . . . and, until it shall be admitted that such a contract with the natives, as has been described, can give a title against an Act of Parliament, they will continue to believe that the Port Phillip adventurers had no better title than themselves.

The statement, sent to Gipps, roused him to wrath. 'This is contrary to the facts', he wrote beside it, 'directly false. It has been officially contradicted by me, and to bring it forward again without reference to my contradiction is contrary to good faith.'¹ It was, if the Hentys had seen the official contradiction: but the brothers were known for their invariable probity and it seems fair to conclude that the Governor's account, written to Russell a few days after James left Sydney, was not made known to James or his London agents, Keddlé, Baker & Grant—not, at all events, before the pamphlet went into print.

¹ MS., M.L.

In his despatch of 11 April Gipps had told the Minister in plain words what he thought of the Hentys' activities at Portland Bay. 'The Messrs Henty', he wrote,

like the first Settlers at Port Phillip, claim to have rendered good service to the Government, and to the Colony of New South Wales, by opening a district of a Country which might otherwise have remained unoccupied for a number of years; but so far from considering this any advantage, I look upon it as directly the reverse,—not only because the dispersion of our Population is increased by it, but because also we are forced prematurely to incur considerable expense in the formation of New Establishments. I have already, in consequence of the proceedings of the Messrs Henty, been obliged to send two Expeditions to Portland Bay, and I am now under the necessity of laying out a Town, besides incurring expence for the protection of the Aborigines.¹

Contrast with these almost bitter complaints against one group of forerunners the sentiments expressed by Gipps a little later in the same year. These occur in a general description of the progress of the colony during the years of his own administration, written for the information of the Secretary of State. 'The peculiarities of the country', he wrote,

have since the first led to wide dispersion. Theories founded on concentration are, I venture to say, altogether inapplicable to this country. Let the evils of dispersion, therefore, be what they may, they must here be borne with:—our flocks and herds already stray over a country 900 miles long by 300 miles wide and I hesitate not to say that any attempt to bring them within the limits even of our twenty contiguous counties, would end in failure, if not in the ruin of the Colony. The rapidity with which Stations are pushed into the interior is very great; and they are frequently formed without the permission, or even the knowledge, of the Commissioner [of Crown Lands.] Toward the North, Stations already extend to the Country behind Moreton Bay, 300 miles beyond the limit of location; to the South and West, they extend beyond Port Phillip to the boundaries of South Australia. *The persons who form these stations, are the real discoverers of the Country; and they may be said to be in Australia (what the Backwoodsmen are in America) the Pioneers of Civilization.*²

Gipps seems equally sincere in both his admiration of pioneers in general and his irritation with the Henty pioneers

¹ Despatch, 11.4.40 (*I H.R.A.*, vol. xx, pp. 593-4).

² Despatch, 28.9.40 (*ibid.*, pp. 837-844).

in particular. Perhaps he recognized the value of such men only while their activities cost the Government nothing or, better still, if as 'real discoverers' they saved the Government expense. With regard to the achievements of that official discoverer, Sir Thomas Mitchell, he considered that his

long and expensive journies . . . in the years 1835 and 1836, though highly interesting, led to no discoveries which could be turned to profit—with the exception perhaps of the fertile land of Australia Felix, which would surely have been reached by the ordinary advance of our Graziers, even though he had never visited it.

And yet the Messrs. Henty, graziers, were to be penalized for having advanced into Australia Felix in just such a way. Gipps, however, did not consider that they had any cause for complaint: he said it was to be borne in mind that

if the Messrs Henty have the prospect of suffering a loss on the buildings which they have erected and the land which they have brought into cultivation, they on the other hand, have gained greatly, by having been in undisturbed and exclusive possession of a very extensive tract of the best grazing land in the Country for a period of six years.¹

In private letters written at this time Gipps informed LaTrobe (18.4.40) that he had

refused to acknowledge in any way Mr. Henty's right to the Land on which he and his brothers had squatted. He is of course dissatisfied, and has sent home a Memorial to the Secy of State . . . The Ex. Council has pronounced against him—and I have reported strongly in the same line. You are aware, I daresay that Mr. Henty came to Sydney especially in this Business.²

Gipps was writing in answer to a private letter from LaTrobe of 4 April 1840 in which he reported that there had been

more than one serious affray between the settlers in the more distant parts of the District and the Blacks. All I can do is to try to get at the truth and the result is ordinarily anything but satisfactory. I fear as I have before said that these are only the beginning of troubles for I do not see that we possess at present either morally or physically the power of prevention. An increase of the police force seems absolutely necessary. . . .

¹ Despatch, 11.4.40 (*I H.R.A.*, vol. xx, pp. 593-4).

² *Gipps-LaTrobe Correspondence* (*Melb. Arch.*).

LaTrobe was referring to the country west of Geelong in general: troubles likely to arise at Portland Bay in particular were, however, much on his mind. He went on to say that

The question of the speedy settlement of Portland Bay urges itself upon the attention more forcibly than ever, as since the commencement of the year I have ascertained that the ingress of settlers from V.D. Land and from this district has been very considerable. I have had no kind of directions as to the time or mode of placing a Branch of the Gov^t here.

As a first step towards the maintenance of law and order at the Bay, LaTrobe officially recommended that Stephen and Edward Henty should be made magistrates—so much for Collier's charges against Edward, investigated by Fyans the previous year. Stephen, as LaTrobe now reminded the Governor, was at the Bay and Edward up the country. 'I have', he said, 'taken some trouble to hear what could be said *in disfavoured* of Mr. Henty of Portland Bay but have only elicited praises.'

Gipps had ordered the survey of Portland, and had hamstrung the Hentys, but apparently had not envisaged having to trouble himself further about the Bay so soon. But in the face of LaTrobe's apprehensions and his plain hint to his senior officer that action was overdue, Gipps could no longer delay. 'With respect to Portland Bay', he wrote on 18 April,

I will endeavour to send you instructions by the next Post—but until I rec^d your letter of the 4th inst. I did not think that there was any immediate need for the adoption of any measures in that Quarter.

Now, measures followed fast. His first step was to make Stephen and Edward Henty honorary magistrates, their appointment being gazetted in Sydney four days after his letter to LaTrobe.¹ On 1 July the Portland Bay area was proclaimed a district distinct from the District of Port Phillip.² On 18 August a police magistrate was appointed, James Blair, described by Gipps as 'one of the best we have'.³ And in September it was announced that a sale of Portland Bay land was to take place on the 15th of the following month.⁴

¹ *N.S.W. Government Gazette*, 22.4.40.

² *Ibid.* 30.9.40. 'Messrs Henty Brothers' were among those who obtained licences. Port Phillip District had been proclaimed 21.5.39 (*Boys*, p. 94).

³ *Gipps-LaTrobe Correspondence (Melb. Arch.)*.

⁴ *Boys*, p. 113.

In making his plan for the proposed town, in the absence of special instructions Surveyor Tyers could not be expected—or allowed—to break away from the normal rectangular layout; he had no power, and the Governor had no wish, to consider for a moment the special interests of a group of settlers who had squatted there at their own risk. To the incensement, but hardly to the surprise, of James and his brothers, Tyers's plan showed the north-south line of Bentinck Street drawn straight along the top of the bluff, right through the houses, stables, and stores of the Henty establishment. On the plan were thirty-one ten-acre sections, nine of them sub-divided into half-acre lots ready for sale; one of the nine so sub-divided—No. 4—contained most of this considerable group of buildings: evidence of independence, energy, and ambition, they clustered behind Stephen's flagstaff regardless of any plan but their own.

There was as yet no newspaper published at the Bay, but local indignation with government moves found vent as far away as Melbourne, where the *Port Phillip Gazette*, always ready to fulminate against Sydney headquarters, stated (12.6.39) that

Mr. Henty, the spirited and enterprizing gentleman resident at Portland Bay, and whom we feel proud to claim as a fellow Colonist in Australia Felix, has been . . . allowed to watch the fruits of industry ripening to his hand only to behold them snatched away by the rapacious policy of our great and liberal Government. . . .

Meantime the Hentys, ardent believers in the justice of their case, followed up their memorial to Her Majesty's Government by appealing for the help of 'friends at home'. In June 1840 James wrote 'very reluctantly' 'to intrude himself upon the notice' of their old ally, the Earl of Surry, M.P. He reminded Surry that his help in 1835 had produced the letter from Lord Aberdeen; he related something of what in consequence the family had done at Portland Bay; and informed him that to their surprise—'and we have no doubt to that of your Lordship'—the Sydney Government had 'altogether slighted' their interpretation of Aberdeen's letter and that Sir George Gipps had

given orders to measure off and lot out for sale the lands enclosed and cultivated by us with the Houses and other extensive buildings occupied by my Brothers. . . . To protect ourselves from the

threatened ejectment and the depreciation of all our hardly wrought Improvements we have forwarded a memorial of our case to the Colonial Office in hopes of a just allowance of our claims. I again in the name of my mother and the members of our family most respectfully beg Your Lordship's kind interference in our behalf to support our application. . . . So important is this matter to the well doing of our large family, that we have employed a professional friend and others to place the facts in a simple straightforward light to be laid before the Government and our friends. I have so far trespassed upon Your Lordship's former kindness as to say to Mr. Baker that I think he may venture to wait on Your Lordship for your kind opinion and advice.¹

Besides engaging the legal firm of Keddle, Baker & Grant, James invoked the help of one, J. G. Blake, a personal friend. He knew Mr. Blake well enough to write with unrestrained resentment of the attitude of Governor Gipps. 'The fact is', he said,

He has determined to sell the Land to the highest bidder and turn us out like dogs, giving us no compensation for all the improvements we have effected by which and our exertions alone has the place become of any value whatever to the Crown. This monstrous decision has of course annoyed us not a little independent of which the pecuniary loss to us can hardly be estimated at less than £5000. . . . In order not to trouble our friends unnecessarily my Brother William has entrusted the Papers to an old professional friend of his (Baker of Fenchurch St.) who will call upon you with the particulars of our claim and I feel satisfied that from the friendship you have always evinced towards us and more particularly to my poor Father that you will assist us with your support in obtaining common justice from the Colonial Office.

Lord Aberdeen's Letter having been addressed to Lord Surry, through whose kind interference it was obtained, I have written to him by the present opportunity and think should the Whigs remain in power that channel will be the most likely to effect a favorable result. . . . What I fear is that my statement to the Colonial Office sent through Sir Geo. Gipps having had the start by some weeks of my present conveyance it is possible an off hand answer may have been given before our detailed statement gets home.

In September, on the announcement of Portland's land sale, James wrote to Gipps again. Like the memorial, the letter was

¹ *Henty Family Papers.*

signed by James on behalf of himself, his brother-in-law Samuel Bryan, and of all the other brothers—Charles Shum, William, Edward, Stephen George, John, and Francis: a family list of imposing length. It told the Governor of the letter sent to Surry three months earlier, proclaimed their 'full reliance on the efforts of His Lordship in conjunction with our friends at home to obtain a just recognition' of their claim, and added that they trusted to the Governor's sense of what was fairly due to them not to disturb them in their occupation of the Bay until they had received an answer from the Secretary of State. 'Your Excellency', the letter ended,

was understood to have concurred in this in conversation with Mr. James Henty when at Sydney but as most important interests of numerous Individuals are involved our dignity induces us to place our requisition fully before Your Excellency and to request the favor of Your Excellency's reply.¹

Gipps noted on the margin the terms in which the Colonial Secretary was to answer: the Hentys were to be told that until an answer was received by Gipps to his despatch on the subject he would endeavour to disturb them as little as possible—or as was compatible with public demands for land; but that he regretted he could not in any way alter the view which he had already taken of their case or of their claims to compensation.

The reply to Gipps's despatch was to be a long time coming, perhaps delayed by the activities of Keddle, Baker & Grant. As for the 'kind interference' of the faithful Surry, it brought him a rebuff from Lord John Russell that, when it reached Gipps some time later, must have pleased the Governor much. 'The case of these Gentlemen', Russell told Surry,

has already been under my consideration and after giving the most careful attention to it I have found myself compelled to reject their claims—So far from desiring to encourage the unauthorized formation of Settlements on the coast of New Holland Her Majesty's Government must do all in their power for the prevention of it. Such proceedings by anticipating the regular progress of such Settlements expose the local Treasury to great and needless Expenditure—render the Administration of Justice and the protection of Settlers more difficult and costly than it would otherwise be—tend to the dispersion of a scanty population which it is desirable to concentrate

¹ *M.L.*



By courtesy of the Trustees, Mitchell Library

42. MELBOURNE AS IT WAS IN 1839

when James and Edward Henty visited Port Phillip to see Superintendent Latrobe



By courtesy of the Trustees, Mitchell Library

43. PORTLAND BAY, PROBABLY EARLY 1840

with the Henty houses showing under the gum-tree branch, and whaling buildings nearer on the beach and creek

Water-colour by C. J. Tyers

Certificate of Marriage.

No. 137. Edward Henty --- of the Parish Bachelor --- and
Anna Maria Gallie of the Parish Spinster --- were
married in this Church by License with consent of ---
this sixteenth day of October --- in the year 1840.

By me Adam Bampton Norton Chaplain
This Marriage was { Edward Henty
solemnized between us { Anna Maria Gallie

In the Presence of { J. W. McArthur of Melbourne
{ J. G. Henty of Portland Bay

I hereby certify that the above is a true and correct Copy of the Episcopal Church Register Book of the
Parish of St James Melbourne, Port Phillip in the County of Bourke in New South
Wales, for MARRIAGES. Witness my hand this seventeenth day of October in the year
of Our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty.

Adam Bampton Norton Chaplain.

—facilitate smuggling and tend to dispossess the public at large of Land which it is essential to reserve for public uses.¹

The Messrs. Henty, Russell concluded, 'are not regarded by the Governor of New South Wales as Benefactors to the Colony'—thus putting both Lord Surry and the Hentys in their proper place.

In accordance with his assurance that the Hentys would be disturbed as little as possible pending the ruling of the Colonial Office, Gipps did not propose to offer Section 4 for sale before that decision was received. But, lest when the decision arrived it involved their ejection, it was necessary for the Hentys to erect another house and new outbuildings; and for this purpose Stephen prepared to bid for allotments from one of the sections to be offered for immediate sale. The sale, announced for 15 October 1840, was not to be at the Bay but at Melbourne. Both Stephen and Edward were there—indeed, they made sure of being in time, for they left Launceston in their schooner *Minerva* on 10 August and arrived at Port Phillip on the 18th. Bids were not expected to be high, but the sale's sensational results proved that over-bold land speculation persisted, despite such warning signals as the phenomenon of Launceston's and Hobart's 'distressed poor'. The land offered was of three kinds—20 acres of town, 212 acres of suburban ('fit for gardens or the erection of villas in the immediate neighborhood of the town'), and 267 acres of 'land fit for cultivation within the distance of two miles from the town'. The total sum produced for the Government was £17,245. 10s. 5d.: £551. 6s. an acre for the town land, £64 for the suburban and £11. 7s. for the cultivation blocks—sums far greater than those paid at the first sale of Melbourne land and that prompted the *Port Phillip Patriot* 'seriously to doubt the sanity of some of our fellow colonists'. The highest bidder for town land was Stephen Henty, who paid £1,240 for an acre and a half of Section No. 3. He also bought an area of cultivation land (? 26 acres) for £294 and Edward 20 acres of suburban land for £307. 10s. Thus the Hentys alone paid nearly one-eighth of the total sum received by the Government from the sale.²

The Hentys themselves were men of too much sense to

¹ *I H.R.A.*, vol. xxii, p. 91.

² *Learmonth*, Appendix I; *P. Ph. Gaz.* 17.10.40; *N.S.W. Govt. Gaz.* 26.1.41.

imagine that the Bay could continue for ever uncontrolled, or to wish that it should. But to them it seemed just, and much simpler than in reality it was, to allow them to stay where they were, without charge or molestation, as a reasonable reward for having opened up this corner of the Continent by their own enterprise, exertions, and expenditure of capital. In Gipps they met with not only a different view but an attitude of hostility. To him they were not merely not benefactors to the colony; they were intruders, a nuisance to his administration and to himself. The auctioneer's wooden hammer, knocking down, for the Government's benefit, the land at the Bay, was not more unfeeling of the Hentys than was Governor Gipps.

THREE WEDDINGS AND SOME LETTERS

IN Edward at least, indignation with the Government must at this time have taken a secondary place. The brothers had eight weeks to pass in Port Phillip between their arrival and the date of the sale. Stephen, one must believe, took the chance to see something of the surrounding country and the sheep-runs whose masters were so many of them and so lately from Van Diemen's Land; but Edward was probably well content with life in Melbourne itself, held there by the presence of a young English visitor under the roof of one well-known hospitable house. Very soon after his arrival he wrote to tell his mother of his engagement to Miss Anne Gallie, whom he had met on his earlier visit to the settlement to see LaTrobe. Anna Maria were her full names; her father was Hugh Gallie, Esq., of Plymouth, Devonshire; a brother, David, had recently gone from Port Phillip to live in Launceston. Miss Gallie's mother was not in the colony; Miss Gallie was apparently being looked after by Mrs. D. C. MacArthur, wife of the manager of the Melbourne branch of the Bank of Australasia, the bank of which Charles Henty was the Launceston manager. Edward's announcement of this news brought a trio of letters across the Strait; his mother's reply, and two from Charles's wife, Susan, one of them addressed to Edward's wife-to-be. His mother's shows pleasure in her son's happiness, together with a little tentative maternal planning and a willingness to have those plans over-ridden, a hint of the restless nature of Edward's recent years and, in a postscript, the only glimpse we have of him as possessing even the smallest interest in one of the arts.

Mrs. Thomas Henty
to her son, Edward.

Launceston
19th Sept. [1840]

My dear Edward,

I was much satisfied with your letter from Port Phillip finding as I did you had gained the affections of a Person who evidently had made a strong impression on you during your previous Visit to that

Place and from farther acquaintance had grown into a sincere affection, and which I have no doubt will increase with years from all accounts I hear of her, and I do hope and trust my dear Edward you will have many *many* happy years with her, which will make up for the buffeting you have had for some years past, and yet, with all the rubs you have had, how mercifully have you been preserved by our *All gracious God* from *serious* bodily harm, I need not remind you to be grateful to Him for past mercies and humbl[y] trusting on him for more—I shall indeed dear Edward be truly glad to receive the Person of your choice as my *Daughter*, and feel assured I shall like her; I am quite certain a Married Life is greatly to be preferred to a single one, particularly when the Minds are tolerably well suited to each other, and if they are not quite so, each conforming a little, they soon grow into a similarity.

But would it not be better to bring Miss Gallie up and stay with me some little time before the marriage takes place, leaving her with me, and you return to Portland Bay to prepare a little there, then come back here again and be married at Launceston, but perhaps Miss Gallie would not like so well to come in the Vessel before she was married, that you must leave to her, all I can say is, I shall be most happy to receive her in any way most pleasant to yourselves, and the sooner the better as I know your time is precious. Anxiously hoping you will be as successful in all your other affairs as you have in this *most important one to you*, I am, my dearest Edward with kindest love ever

Your affectionate Mother

FRANCES HENTY

P.S. Your flute, dear Edward was found in Susan's little bedroom where you slept, with another small Box, no doubt containing something of yours. I am most anxious to hear of your safe arrival at Portland Bay.

Mrs. Charles Shum Henty
to Miss Anne Gallie

Launceston
19th September 1840

My dear Miss Gallie,

My Brother Edward's announcement of his successful suit with you gave us sincere pleasure and judging by his letters he is really and truly happy and thinks himself an unusually lucky fellow. Since his visit to Port Phillip we have seen that his feelings towards you have been very susceptible and that it only required a more intimate acquaintance with you to mature and strengthen his first impressions into feelings of love and affection. My good husband and I are prepared to love and welcome you as a Sister for dear Edward's sake

and from all we have heard, and the *sample* we have seen, we judge we have only to know you to value you for your own. Edward thinks himself fortunate in having gained your affections. I have no doubt he is—but I must say I think you partake of that fickle Lady's favors. I know Edward possesses a warm affectionate heart, with a good disposition and many other qualifications, which render one's home and fireside cheerful and happy. In his various relationships he has always done his duty, and we value him much—the Hentys are proverbial as being the best husbands in the World—I back mine against them all—I think it likely you and I may contend this point some future day—the sooner the better. I am sorry it could not have been arranged for you to have come up to Launceston with your Brother to stay with Mrs. Henty our dear Mother—she of course having the first claim to you—and after a little time the wedding might take place at her house—you may think me premature—but let me advise you against a long engagement as in these distant realms the means of communication are so limited and uncertain. Do not my dear Miss Gallie think me interfering by thus freely stating my opinion. I already look upon you as a Member of our family and desire to avoid all formality and stiffness—dear Mother and I have held much conversation on the subject and as we agree in our views I have stated them without hesitation at the same time with due submission to your and Edward's wishes. Will you kindly offer our compliments to Mr. and Mrs. MacArthur and say that we shall be happy to make their acquaintance when an opportunity offers—having other letters to write I must say adieu wishing you every happiness and praying God to direct you in all your undertakings. If you can find time to write to me as well as dear Mother do and tell me your own views and thoughts freely—with every *pre-disposition* to love you in which my Husband unites, believe me

My dear Miss Gallie,

Yours with much sincerity,

SUSAN HENTY

Your Brother has not yet arrived we expect him every hour

Mrs. Charles Shum Henty
to her brother-in-law
Edward Henty

Launceston 19th September 1840

My dear Brother

You will give me credit for sincerity when I state that your tidings of success in your addresses to the sweet girl of your heart afforded us real joy and pleasure. As you suspected many and numerous were the cogitations on the sofa and when any of us met you would have

been amused to have seen the knowing smiles that were exchanged. I may add that the smile of *approbation* was universal throughout your family on the arrival of the agreeable news and it was a general exclamation that we hoped Ted would be happy for he deserved to be so—we are prepared to love your Treasure for your sake and if all we have heard of her is true, and I have great faith, as soon as you will give us the chance to know her we shall value her for her own worth—we are very anxious to welcome her to Launceston—I wish she could come and stay with our dear Mother and the wedding to take place at her house so many of your own family being here and her Brother too—it appears to me you would both be in the midst of your friends more here than at Port Phillip and perhaps Mr. MacArthur might get a holiday on such an occasion. I have mentioned the subject to Miss Gallie and of course you will talk it over together and act for the best—of course dear Edward I need not say how happy dear Charles and I shall be to do any and every thing for you—if she or her friends object to the wedding taking place in Launceston of course you would not urge it—but if I were you I would use all my powers of persuasion against a long engagement situated at such a distance from each other as you must be it would entail many disagreeables and harass you both much—and after all when would [*torn*]—tell her with my love that you [*are*] really *what you appear* and that you could not wear a disguise and I feel assured she must be guileless or you could not love her—we are most anxious to hear of yr safe arrival at the Bay—continue to write to some of us that we may know your views and plans—you know dear Edward your happiness is dear to us and sincerely do we pray that your choice may promote it and that our Heavenly Father will shed his choicest blessings on you both in this world and enable you to set forth his glory in spirit and in truth that when this course is ended you may be prepared to meet those joys which pass all understanding. I must now say God bless you dear Edward and believe me

Your ever affectionate Sister

SUSAN HENTY

Dear Shum has written for himself his voice *faltered* when reading your letter aloud to his dear William Give my affectionate love to dear Stephen

Edward, now thirty years old, had no intention of letting the engagement be long. The day after the land-sale he and Anne Gallie were married in Melbourne's new and not-yet-finished parish church of St. James,¹ among the carpenters'

¹ This stone church replaced a wooden one, Melbourne's first (opened in Feb.

litter and in the presence of Mr. MacArthur and Stephen Henty, as witnesses, and presumably of other well-wishing friends. On 31 October Edward and his wife sailed in the barque *Mona* and arrived at Launceston on 12 November to meet the expectant family circle before going on to live at the Bay.

At the same time as Edward's marriage his companion of the first Portland Bay days, Henry Camfield, long in pursuit of matrimony, had at last reached his goal. Ten years older than Edward, in his case the 'buffettings' of colonial life had been a good deal more unkind. The Hentys had failed to persuade him to leave Swan River to farm in Van Diemen's Land or to join their venture at Portland Bay: as Camfield had recently written, something has always appeared, as it were, to tell me I ought not to desert my adopted country, tho' I get poorer in pocket every year, and we (the Colony) have more severe difficulties to contend with.

In reality he had long ago been defeated by the West and though he clung to ownership of his acres there he had spent much of the last seven years wandering backwards and forwards between the Swan, the Sound, Launceston, Portland Bay, and Sydney, ending his absenteeism late in 1839, only just in time to save forfeiting his grant across the Darling Range. In debt for some time past to his father and to the Hentys, he now had to sell his precious bull and a pair of bullocks to enable him to pay even a small part of what he owed. Unlike Edward, who according to his mother grew excited and gave way to his 'nerves' when things went wrong, under misfortune Camfield merely added melancholy to his unsettled state. Mrs. Henty's advice to her son was to do everything possible to strengthen his nerves and to ask God's help in his endeavours: Camfield did not need urging to call on God's help—he could not live without it. Only necessity kept him in the wilds where he missed 'the regular and well-spent Sabbath and the chiming bell', so essential to his peace of mind. Thomas Henty had said of Camfield that he was vacillating in everything except his belief in the value of his land: evidently Thomas had not run counter

1837, in William Street, between Bourke and Collins Streets) and had been in use only two weeks before Edward's marriage. It was still unplastered and without its spire and was temporarily fitted with the pews from the earlier church (*Boys*, p. 138). In 1844 the church was taken down, stone by stone, and re-erected where it now stands on the corner of King and Batman Streets.

to Camfield's unshakable belief in the obligation of Sunday observance, as all Perth did once. At the time in question Camfield had become a government official and as Postmaster-General was living in Perth. Another good churchman tells the tale—the Rev. John Wollaston of Bunbury, in Perth for a while to plead the cause of neglected souls in the south. His journal records that on Sunday, 13 August 1843,

while we were preparing for Church, guns were heard—the *Madras* had arrived at Fremantle. 'Ship from England' in everyone's mouth and causing great bustle. To Church, however, we went. Read morning service and preached. . . . At 2 p.m. the mail arrived. At Perth Great Commotion at detention of letters by Postmaster General, Mr. Camfield. He is a very conscientious man and had previously told the Governor he must resign if he insisted upon the distribution of letters on Sunday. No mail had before arrived on a Sunday, so here was the test, and like a good man he kept his word. I was assailed by several for my opinion and asked to interfere with Mr. Camfield but I would have nothing to do with the business. I cannot blame a man who acts conscientiously. It may, however, be said that this was not like the common delivery of a Sunday post. News from England had not arrived for many months; everyone's mind was absorbed by the anticipation of letters and thus feelings proper for the day were disturbed and service was not to take place again until 7 o'clock in the evening. Under these circumstances I am inclined to think mercy and not sacrifice should have been the interpretation of the opening of the mail. But, as I have said, I could not blame Mr. Camfield.¹

Camfield's religious fervour was not kept for Sundays alone; every day, in his poverty and loneliness, he needed the armour of belief. If it had not been for this craving and his conscience, he might have been happily married already—for he craved marriage too. His infatuation for the lovely Anna Ralston had faded when on his return to the West he fell in love with Fanny Bussell of the Vasse. It was Fanny, gay, charming, and intelligent, whose glances had so pleasurably disturbed him when he met the Bussell sisters in Perth in 1837. She had thought it 'just as well' they were not thrown much together; perhaps at the time Camfield thought so too. He had recently let his farm on the Swan and told Fanny he was about to go across the Range to live for a while with a friend; but next year he went

¹ *Picton Journal*, pp. 259-60.

south to visit her family, staying with them on their property, Cattle Chosen, on the Vasse River near Cape Naturaliste—‘the Cape’, to residents on the Swan. He went in hope and hope seemed likely to be fulfilled when something happened that revealed a fundamental difference between himself and his ‘fair Friend’: he was witness to a clash between the settlers and some natives that ended, like others of that period, in the blacks being shot down. In this affair, Fanny’s brothers did the shooting, and Fanny approved. Camfield looked on it as no other than murder; torn between principle and personal longing, he brooded on it for months, finally writing to his sister Bessie to unburden his soul. He mentioned no names, but he used Fanny’s first two initials and the incidents he describes, and the actors, are known. ‘I must tell you’, he wrote in November 1839, ‘a little about the Cape.’

About a year before I went down the natives had speared a cow belonging to a neighbour of *my friends*, it was thought proper to punish them for it, three were shot, I saw their graves. The natives some time after this came to a third party, and speared a man in the arm, surrounded his house and purposed no doubt murdering his wife and children. Now understand, the first human blood in this district was spilled by the whites; three blacks were killed and as yet no whites; this is how it stood when I went down, when the natives were troublesome again, stealing potatoes and flour, caught in the fact with the latter but suffered to run away: I was for having them caught and treated according to law, but my friends were for more summary proceedings, the end of it, a spring gun was set for several nights—at last a man was shot in the act of opening a door to steal bread—a party went off to scour the bush, I alone buried the dead, before it was light. The next morning prisoners were brought in, and one, endeavouring to make his escape, was shot; before this second was done to death I had made up my mind to walk to Augusta 60 miles, did so and brought up the Government Resident [Captain Molloy] Previous to this I think my friends had put down my *not* shooting natives to cowardice, not principle: they were pleased, afterwards, with my part of the proceedings but Taylor¹ tells me my fair friend writes [that] ‘I look on her brothers as being guilty of blood’. They think they are justified, they must protect themselves, they must not starve. So you see *we* do not agree about the natives, nor did I think it a good time to make love.

¹ Patrick Taylor of Albany, since 18.9.37 the husband of Fanny’s sister Mary.

His sensitive spirit found another reason for postponing a declaration. 'After this', he continued,

a young officer of the regiment here was quartered in the neighborhood, was taken ill, and died in the house [of] my friends.¹ A Ship came in on a Saturday, the following morning at 4 he died, on the Monday I walked with my fair friend from the grave, and went on board in the afternoon—this was no time for making love. She had not seen a corpse before—had never read the burial service. I have not seen her since. On our walk to the ship she asked me if I would write to her Mother or Brother—her sister asked me when they should see me again. I wrote to her Mama from the Sound, but as I have wandered so much since I have not received an answer.

His letter returned to the problem that faced settlers everywhere, struggling as they had to for security among natives resentful and dispossessed; a problem already cruelly solved in Van Diemen's Land and now troubling the pastoralist invaders of Australia Felix. How did the problem appear to Bessie, reading Henry's letter in Brighton? 'Self-preservation is the first law of nature', she read, herself secure in a world celebrating the wedding of the young Queen, far from the rule of tooth and claw:

we are to take [care] of our lives—we must take care of our food, we must not starve, but whether we are justified in *shooting* them for *robbing* us? We drive them from their fishing grounds, kill their kangaroo, deprive them of their country. I walk my 10, 20 or more miles a day in the bush by myself and carry nothing in my hand but a shaving case wrapped in a shirt with a toothbrush. I have a great affection for the fellows, think it too much [?]trouble to carry a gun, yet I cannot speak two words of their language nor do I know two natives by name. I do not know of an instance of their attacking a single traveller, armed or unarmed. But what is this long story to do with the Vasse? We differ—we differ on another subject. My fair friend thinks I am *too religious*, too particular, too fond of *do-me-good-books*, and too austere about novels, plays, etc. Whilst staying with the family I found amongst their books, of wh. they have an excellent collection, Pike's Christian D[uty which] if you have not read, get it and see 'On Marriage'. This little book [?]stopped me pursuing

¹ Lieut. H. M. Armstrong, 21st Regt., younger brother of the Captain W. H. Armstrong whom Fanny Bussell had preferred to Lieut. Bunbury when they met in Perth. Lieut. Armstrong was a passenger in the *Sally Ann*, May 1836, with Stephen and his bride (*W.A. Arch.*).

my views in this quarter, I do believe I should have succeeded in my object had it not been for this and the story about the natives. Now Bessie the fair Dame avows much friendship for me and I believe thinks I act on principle, and I think was fast giving way to my desires when this book, I tell you, bothered me. I wish to act right, of course. When I left her I had no idea of going to Sydney, when I made up my mind to go it was only for three months, she might naturally conclude I was in no hurry to return.

She might indeed: he was away from the West for a whole year.

Henry's letter to Bessie was nearly done. There had been, he told her, a 'rich swain' in the offing; rumour said that during the year of Camfield's absence the swain had been accepted by Fanny and then dismissed. Since his return to the West, Camfield had had no communication with the family but he was told that Fanny was still unmarried and had been very ill.

Here Henry broke off: 'Bessie', he said,

I am heartily tired of my subject, why I began it I cannot tell. . . . I sometimes think I am making an idol of this little woman, we must have one God, we must devote our inmost thoughts to Him and to Him only. . . .

There was something else he thought: 'I sometimes think (I have had much opportunity of observing) the married life after all is very uncertain as to happiness.' May be, but Bessie longed for him to risk it—it was her 'Heart's wish'.

Nearly a year later—on 14 October, two days before Edward Henty's wedding day—Camfield wrote to Bessie again. On the eleventh anniversary of his arrival at the Swan he had proposed marriage to a Miss Ann Breeze, and she had said Yes. Ann, an orphan, had come to the colony as governess with the first members of the Western Australian Missionary Society.¹ She was 'just the girl sister Bessie would have chosen'; good, very religious, much respected by the wise and valuable, of an amiable temper and sound understanding'. At this time Camfield was acting as head of the Revenue Office at Perth, with a salary of £100 a year. On this, he and Ann Breeze married, Ann, as she wrote to Bessie, receiving

the warmest congratulations on every hand on my being married to him and I was more than once told that our marriage had the

¹ Ann Breeze arr. Fremantle in the *Shepherd*, with the Rev. William Mitchell and his wife and four children 4.8.38. (*W.A. Arch.*).

fairest prospects of happiness of any that had taken place for a long time.

Henry's lonely years were over. Burdened as he was by poverty and uncertain health, childless as he was to remain, because of his wife's companionship he could call himself blest. And when he fell into moods of despondency, as he often did, she would make use of a stratagem that never failed: luring him with deft questions to speak of his father and sisters and his old beloved home, she would watch his face gradually brighten and his spirits rise. Returning to the past, guiding his wife through those vanished Elysian fields, Henry would forget for a while the dissatisfactions of his present life—forget that, when embarking for the Swan all those years ago, he had looked confidently to becoming a colonial pastoralist, the mender of the family fortunes, whereas he was only an underpaid dyspeptic quill-driver, 'a government man'.¹

Fanny Bussell remained single for many years. In 1851, late in life, she married a widower with grown children, Henry Sutherland, Collector of Colonial Revenue in Perth as once Camfield had been. In less than four years she was a widow, and she returned to Cattle Chosen for the rest of her life. Perhaps in later years her thoughts went back sometimes to that day when she had walked through the bush with Henry Camfield to watch him embark for the Sound and beyond, the question between them unresolved. She probably never knew that the affair had been frustrated by a do-me-good-book from her own family shelves, that the chance of decision had been taken from her by the author of *Christian Duty*, Mr. Pike.

Francis, or Frank, the youngest of the Henty family, and the last to marry, chose an unpropitious time to get engaged. It was August 1841: the colonies were now fully in the grip of the depression and the Hentys' dispute with the Government had reached a crucial point.

Edward, it seems, had been seriously ill and Frank's help at this time would have been more than welcome; but in

¹ In July 1847, Camfield was appointed resident magistrate and sub-collector of customs at Albany and held the position—not very effectively—until 1.1.61. He died 11.10.72. His wife's success in running a school for native children is commented on by Mrs. Smythe in *Narrative of a Voyage to the Fiji Islands* and by Mrs. Millett in *An Australian Parsonage*, pp. 130–3. The Mitchell Library has a photograph of Henry and his wife, with one of the native girls.

August Frank was on a visit to Launceston and unable to tear himself away. Their mother wrote to Edward to explain why. As usual, she showed great concern for Edward's health; his 'lengthened and grievous illness' quite alarmed her and if he felt unequal to taking the voyage to Launceston she herself would go down to Portland Bay—she could not rest with hearing only and was sure the voyage would not hurt her at all. Meantime, determined to help, she and the cook had held kitchen consultations and hoped it would be possible to get some crayfish to send him; 'oysters at all events we can get, and if we think they will keep I will preserve some, and hope and trust my dear Edward they will agree with you and that you will relish them.' It was unfortunate, she said,

that Frank could not go down last time but situated as he was he could not with any regard to his own feelings leave Launceston at a time when the most important event in his Life depended on his remaining a short time longer, having fixed his mind on this young Lady; not having it in his power to make proposals before the Vessel left he could not make up his mind to write particulars in his letters, as he was not quite sure of these being accepted nor did I know it myself that he intended to make the offer but a few days before, as some time previous to that he told me he thought he must give up thinking of being married for the present, times were so bad, and which I mentioned in a letter to Mrs. Stephen and I confess I thought it a wise plan so to do: but he saw so much more of the young Lady afterwards, I suppose he could not withstand the temptation, and having hope, and some little reason to feel that it would be accepted he did make the offer and it appears now to be quite settled. We have seen a great deal of her lately and we like her, and think she will suit Frank, she is very unaffected and cheerful. I think Anne will like her.

The young lady was Mary Ann, eldest daughter of William Effingham Lawrence of Launceston and Formosa, his midlands estate, a member of the Governor's Executive Council and one of the colony's leading men. Mary Ann, of Van Diemen's Land, was not accustomed to hard work and small means, like Eliza Whitfield, Jane Pace, and the other girls of Swan River. She had been sent to the colony's fashionable boarding school, Ellenthorpe Hall, where she acquired the erect deportment, the Italian hand-writing and the proficiency on the piano that Jane and Eliza had been obliged to achieve in their own

hard-working impecunious homes. Of all the Henty wives Mary Ann's is the only face recorded in its youthful bloom; at the time of her engagement, in ribbon-laced bodice and shining gauze, she sat for her portrait to be painted in oils.

The story goes that pretty Mary Ann, newly engaged and, with Mrs. Lawrence, entertaining her future mother-in-law to tea, sat between the two older ladies, a rose sensitive to the presence of two potential thorns. Mrs. Henty, mistress of a cook who was 'free', ventured to sympathize with Mrs. Lawrence on having untaught convict servants: 'it must be so uncomfortable', she said. Mrs. Lawrence tossed her head: 'Not at all!' she countered; 'you see, *I have first pick after the Governor!*' But, as Edward's mother had told him, Mary Ann was unaffected; the portrait shows character as well as charm: Mary Ann was perfectly ready to cast aside social pretensions and set up house at Portland Bay.

Early in September Francis said goodbye for a while to Mary Ann and went down the river to board the *Minerva* at the Heads for the Bay. There at Low Head he had to kick his heels from Tuesday to Friday waiting for a fair wind when he might have stayed in Launceston enjoying himself with Mary Ann. The weather had appeared so bad that at last, tired of lonely walks on shore dreaming of the unattainable, he had arranged to get a horse and return to town for a few days; but as the *Minerva's* captain, and the captain of the schooner *Hawk*, lying alongside, had now determined to sail with the turn of the tide, Francis had to be content with sending a letter back instead. The *Hawk* was bound for Adelaide and both captains were 'anxious to see which is the fastest vessel so that we shall keep company as far as the Bay provided we sail tolerably equal'. 'When taking my leave of you on Monday', he told Mary Ann,

my heart was too full to think of telling you of the Piano which I had just purchased, but before this you will I hope have had the gratification of dancing to it and trying it yourself, and that it may please you is my most sincere wish. Two or three of the notes were a little damp but Susan had taken it in hand before I left and the fire will I hope restore it to its former good preservation. A vessel is just signalled bearing West I hope it may be the Fox from Portland Bay that we may get letters to hear a better account of poor Ted.

The *Minerva* had a fine passage to the Bay of only fifty-two

hours, sailing close to the *Hawk* the whole way: as Frank said, it made it much more agreeable that they had the company of the *Hawk*, 'more particularly as we had the satisfaction of beating her'.

Frank had expected to return in the *Minerva*, visiting Melbourne on the way, but he found Stephen was absent in Melbourne and Edward was still ill, so he had to bear his disappointment and remain at the Bay. A letter to Mary Ann, written in his fine regular script, speaks of a number of things of importance to Portland as well as to themselves and their approaching marriage. 'I am afraid', he wrote,

I shall not be able to get the house that I had set my mind upon as the one in which the Doctor Byass now lives is in the public street and he has orders to move without a prospect of getting any other place but this and as Stephen promised to build it for him he would perhaps feel uncomfortable if he were to deprive him of it, but when I see him to know what kind of an arrangement he has made, I shall be able to give you more particulars and perhaps before the *Minerva* leaves.

The shortage of labour was one of Portland Bay's great problems.

'We have just heard', said Francis, that Stephen has chartered a vessel at Melbourne to bring down Emigrants and are anxiously expecting him every hour. They are expecting six more vessels there with Emigrants, that are now overdue, but from so many being disengaged in Melbourne talk of sending them on to Sydney, where they appear to be nearly as well supplied. I wish they would give us a thought and send two vessels here we might then get labour a little reduced in price.

The first Marriage Ceremony that ever occurred at Portland Bay took place this day by the Revd A. Thomson a Clergyman that married Edward and Annie, he is sent down by the Bishop to report upon the place and to raise subscriptions to build a Schoolhouse, Church, Clergyman's dwelling, etc. the lists are already pretty well filled up for the number of inhabitants and there is but little doubt but that a Clergyman will be appointed almost immediately after Mr. Thomson's return to Melbourne.

He touched on the vexed question of South Australia's uncertain eastern boundary and the longing in that distressed province for a share in the neighbouring fertile lands:

The Adelaide Government are trying to get this District as far as Cape Otway thrown into their Colony to help them out of their difficulties but it is very doubtful if they will accomplish their object the Port Phillipians are quite up in arms against it as they know they would lose the most valuable district in New South Wales.¹

This gossip, and the news that Sir George Gipps was expected in Melbourne by the next trip of the steamer *Sea Horse*, had arrived with Stephen by the Royal Mail Schooner, bringing twenty-six emigrants for the Henty establishment—‘a most valuable importation’, said Francis: ‘I have selected one for us Mrs. Stephen tells me will be an excellent servant she will remain in the house here until we require her services.’ And the *Fox* had come in from Launceston

without one line from the dearest girl to me on earth. Mary Ann did you but know the uneasiness that I experience you would not I am certain have allowed the vessel to leave without writing to me if only a few lines to let me know that you are well. . . . We hear there has been a vague report in Launceston that the *Minerva* was lost, but such reports my dear I should hope you would never think of paying the slightest attention to as James could have contradicted such a report in a moment, he knowing the movements of the vessel. He supposed, in which he was perfectly right, that I had persuaded Edward to detain the *Minerva* until Stephen’s return and I am happy to say we have at last persuaded him to go up to Launceston as the only means in my opinion of his recovery, for he has fallen back so very much this last fortnight.

Francis said there was to be no difficulty about the house; they could not have the one thought of, but Stephen was to begin building them one almost immediately, and according to Frank’s own plan, the rent of course to be in proportion to the outlay of capital.

The *Minerva* was due to sail with Edward and his wife and the letter must be brought to an end. He copied for Mary Ann some verses that seemed to him to match their situation and echo his longing thoughts; sent a greeting to Count Strzelecki, the Polish explorer now at Launceston (Francis would like to have shown him a piece of marble found at Portland by Mr. Tyers);² expressed a hope that Mr. Munday had been diligent

¹ See p. 451, note 1.

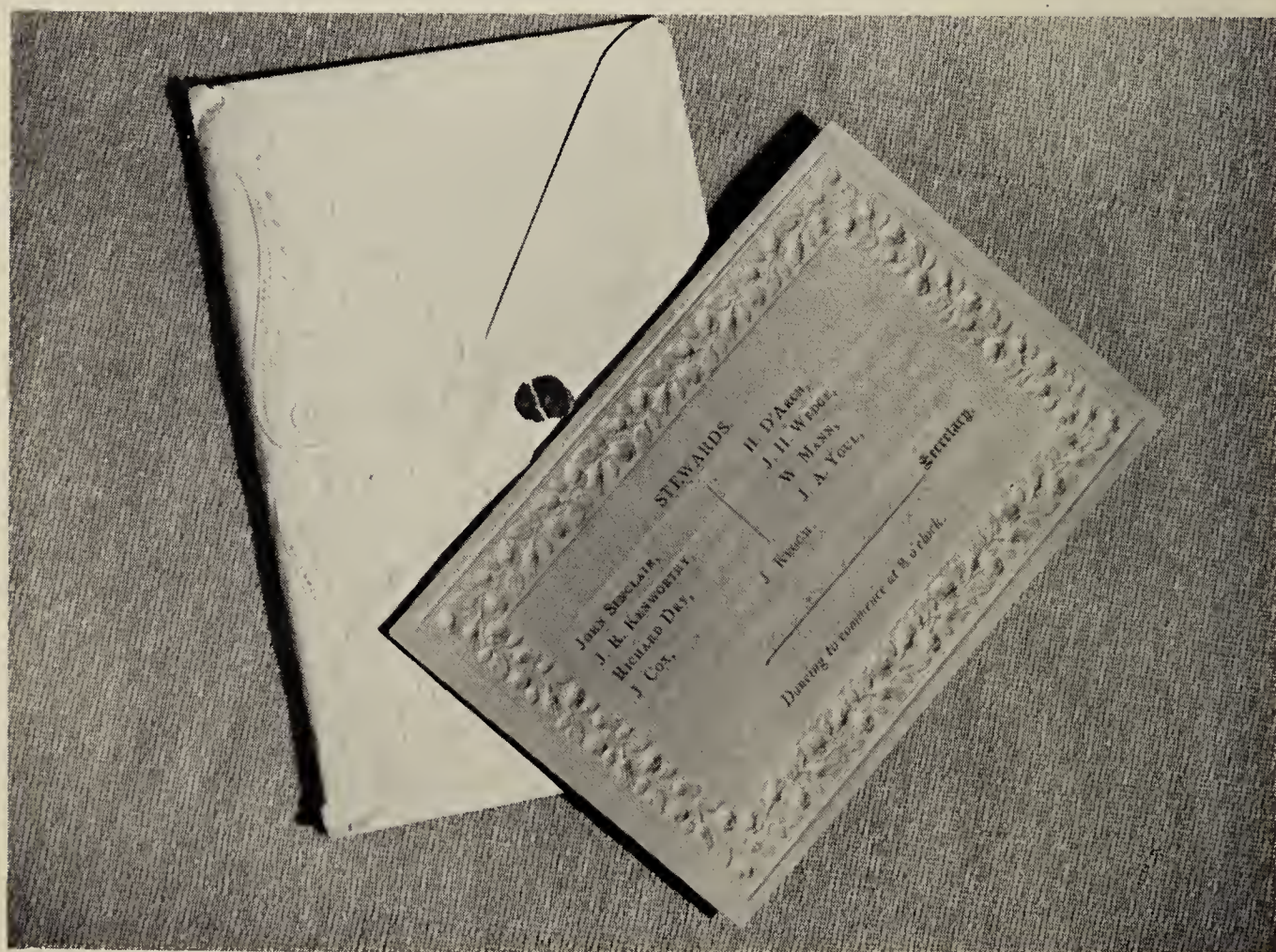
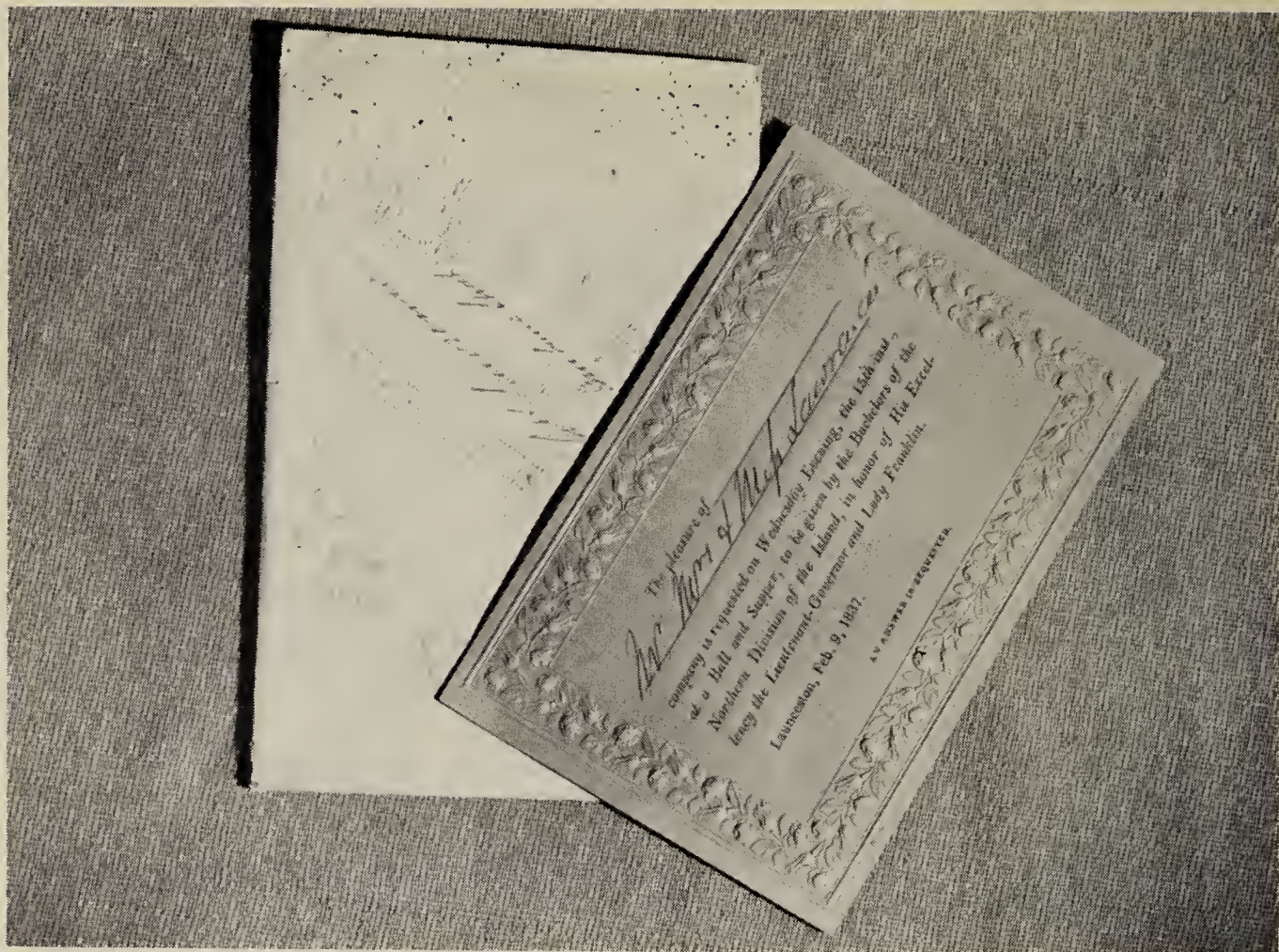
² Strzelecki was among the earliest to find evidence of gold in Australia (1839) but to oblige Governor Gipps, who feared such news would cause an uprising among



By courtesy of Miss Henty Hindson, Sorrento, Victoria

45. MARY ANN LAWRENCE, LAUNCESTON, 1842

Portrait by 'Mr. Munday of this town'



46. INVITATION TO THE NORTHERN BACHELORS' BALL

and finished the portrait long ere this and with more success than at his last attempt ('or he may expect a good scolding from me'):¹ sent his kind love to Mary Ann's Mama, sister Eliza and all the younger branches of the family: only the most urgent business would prevent his coming by the *Minerva*'s next trip. 'God bless you, my dearest Mary Ann, and believe me to be ever your most devoted and affectionately attached Francis Henty.' Nothing urgent arising, the *Minerva* brought him back to Launceston on the next voyage.

Francis and Mary Ann were married at St. John's, Launceston, at eight o'clock in the morning on 5 January 1842. Today, more than a century later, Mary Ann's wedding garments are taken from their box on special occasions to adorn the slimmest of the young girls among her descendants. The stiff silk dress, of a faint colour that is neither grey nor mother-of-pearl, has a pointed bodice and tiny sleeves made for sloping shoulders. The bonnet is grey, pink rose-buds lie under the oval of its rim, and on that summer morning in 1842 bonnet and all were covered by a Limerick lace veil. Like many another girl brought up to leisure, Mary Ann was quite ready to embark on a different life. She expected it to be love in a Portland Bay cottage; instead it turned out that she was soon to lose even the amenities of the Bay and to live up the country, replacing Eliza, John Henty's wife, as mistress of Merino Downs.

the convicts, he omitted any reference to his discovery in his report and in his book, *Physical Description of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land* (1845). His preface to the book's supplement, *Gold and Silver* (1856), explains the omission and its reason. Strzelecki named Australia's highest mountain (7,328 ft.) after his compatriot, Kosciusko, and Gippsland, the south-east region of the then New South Wales, after Governor Gipps.

¹ Portraits of the family of another prominent settler, Thomas Archer of Woolmers, were painted by Munday about this time and hang at Woolmers now. The *Laun. Ex.* announced 8.4.43 that a school of painting was to be established 'under the direction of the justly celebrated artist Mr. Munday of this town and in connection with the Mechanics Institute' (Information, Director, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston).

FAMILY CRISIS

STEPHEN's visit to Melbourne the previous December had been due to a disagreeable cause. In May 1841 Captain Fyans, now Crown Lands Commissioner for the District, had defined a disputed boundary between John Henty of Merino Downs and J. G. Robertson of Wando Vale. In June, defying the Commissioner's decision, John trespassed on the Robertson run; Fyans, appealed to again, fined John for intrusion on his neighbour's land: John thereupon wrote insulting letters to the Commissioner which Fyans sent on to Superintendent LaTrobe.¹ LaTrobe, ever courteous and by no means the invariable supporter of his impulsive commissioner, felt impelled to write John a severe rebuke. To Edward, who had taken up the cudgels on John's behalf and written to LaTrobe complaining of Fyans and protesting at the amount of John's fine, the Superintendent sent a reminder of the uncertain position of a licensee. 'With reference to the main point of dispute between you and Captain Fyans', wrote LaTrobe,

namely your removal from portions of Runs which you or your brother had previously occupied under licence it is my duty at once to state that previous occupation of any part of the country or depasturing ground even under licence cannot ensure to the occupier future unquestioned possession of [it] independent of other considerations. As long as the settlers depasturing stock in the District are few in number a very careful definition of their respective runs is perhaps neither possible nor necessary but as the number of claimants for the occupation of Crown Lands for the purpose of depasturing stock increases, more care must be taken by the Crown Commissioner that as many as the land can conveniently bear are provided for and that no individual put forward a claim to the run of a greater extent of country than his quantity of stock according to the ordinary mode of computation and the character of the localities entitle him to.

In his letter Edward had evidently claimed special privileges

¹ The official papers concerning the disputes in this chapter are in the *Melb. Arch.*

for his family as the district's first settlers: as to this, LaTrobe told him,

however peculiar the circumstances under which your family first entered the Country, and whatever the character of the undecided claims which may have been urged by it upon the attention of Her Majesty's Government, the [Crown Commissioner] is in this respect quite unauthorized to make any exception.

LaTrobe found that Fyans had done no more than his duty and considered the fine no more than was justified under the Act. But, he pointed out, even though John had felt himself to be ill-treated that did not excuse him for being what Fyans had described as 'studiously rude and insulting from first to last'—a description that LaTrobe regretted to inform Edward was most completely borne out by the concurring testimony to be gathered not only from parties who were witnesses of Mr. J. Henty's conduct but yet more conclusively from the style and manner of his own written communications to the Crown Commissioner the originals of which now lie before me. No supposed injury can bear Mr. John Henty out in the adoption of such disrespectful bearing and language to an Officer of the Crown. . . . I have felt it my duty to address a communication to him in consequence stating that had Captain Fyans pressed the matter I could have felt no hesitation in bringing the matter under His Excellency's attention and advising the cancelling of his licence.

By the same mail as this most uncomfortable missive there arrived another from LaTrobe with the news, communicated to the Messrs. Henty by command of His Excellency the Governor, that the Secretary of State declined to confirm them in their occupation of the land claimed at Portland Bay or to allow compensation for it. Stephen at once took ship for Melbourne to ask LaTrobe for time for the removal of their house and other improvements and if possible to repair the damage to the family reputation done by Edward and John. LaTrobe and Stephen both being equable and well-mannered, the interview was probably amiable enough. They had met before, on the occasion of the Superintendent's first tour as far as Portland Bay. Arrived at the Bay at the end of five days in the saddle, after 'a dark ride through the forest' 'on abominable roads and stumbling horses', LaTrobe had been 'received by Stephen Henty and family' and during the next day or so had heard

statements of the Henty claims.¹ Now, in his Melbourne office, finding from discussion with Stephen that six months would be enough time for the removal of the buildings, he assumed authority to sanction the Hentys' occupation of the Crown lands in question until 6 March 1842, that is, six months from the date of their being informed of the Secretary of State's rejection of their claims.

The stipulated date was long past when LaTrobe learnt early in August from Blair, the police magistrate at Portland, that the Hentys had made no move: indeed, through another channel, perhaps mere gossip, he heard—and told Gipps of it—that their premises had just been put into fresh repair. From Blair's point of view, removal of the Hentys had become imperative. In anticipation of the next land sale he was employing 'the Emigrants' to clear the future streets of trees; some of the work had been done, but it could not be completed without entering on land occupied by the Hentys—land reckoned as 80 or 90 acres or about three-fourths of the township. As 'these Gentlemen seemed to consider that any interference with it must be entirely permissive on their part' Blair 'deemed it best to defer these improvements' until he received definite instructions from LaTrobe.

All through, LaTrobe had been as sympathetic with the Hentys as was compatible with carrying out his orders from Gipps: now, however, annoyance stiffened his despatches to Portland Bay. Blair was reminded somewhat sharply of the refusal of the Secretary of State to comply with the Hentys' requests and told that it was his duty to proceed against them in every respect as unauthorized occupiers of Crown Lands. To strengthen Blair's hands LaTrobe enclosed an opinion on the subject he had 'thought it expedient' to obtain from the Crown Prosecutor. Blair, reputedly a firm disciplinarian himself, perhaps did not need urging to his disagreeable task.

When LaTrobe's instructions reached Blair, Edward was up the country doing the rounds of the stations and sleeping under a blanket tent. On his return, doubtless looking forward to a solid roof, a warm bed, and other home comforts, he was met by the dismaying news. As he grumbled in a letter to William, it was

¹ LaTrobe's *Australian Notes* (Melb. Arch.).

a pleasant thing after 35 days in the Bush at this the worst of all seasons to return home and have notice to quit immediately and be told the Govt. can seize everything even my furniture but that is all my eye this is old Cook's opinion, an old fool, he recommends to the Govt. that no force of arms should be used in ejecting us.

Edward was thoroughly out of humour: as partners in the establishment all the Hentys were financially affected by the eviction order but he alone of the brothers was actually to lose his present roof. Stephen, with his wife and family of three, was now living in the house that, to forestall this possibility, he had built farther along the newly created Bentinck Street;¹ Frank was in a comfortable house, also in Portland and presumably the one built especially for him and Mary Ann (and according to Edward Frank was enjoying its metropolitan comforts to the detriment of the flocks inland); only Edward, apparently still living in the house whose first portion was put up in 1835, was to be in the position of having 'now no home to go to'. He was not going to lift a finger to take down the dwelling he had himself erected with so much toil. 'I refuse to move the buildings or fence', he told William,

but throw no obstacle in the way and the Emigrants by order of the Police Magistrate commence pulling the Fence down tomorrow and I shall remain in the House until we hear from Mr. LaTrobe. We purpose asking his permission for the Buildings to remain until the Land shall be sold as they are of little value when removed.

Edward does not mention his wife's feelings at the prospect of

¹ In 1846 Stephen's new house, a two-story brick dwelling with attic and basement, was leased to the Union Bank as its first Portland premises. It appears as one of the bank buildings pictured in the margin of Bermingham's map of the town published in 1853, of which a copy hangs in Portland's municipal offices. In altered but recognizable form the house is still there, as No. 77 Bentinck Street. The proof that it was actually lived in by Stephen prior to being leased by him to the bank is contained in a letter made available by the management of the Australia and New Zealand Bank, Melbourne; the letter is from the bank's Portland manager, 3.11.47, and refers to 'the wretched kitchen attached to the house' of which he said he had 'been complaining to Mr. Henty ever since I have occupied his premises. He admits himself that it was his intention to have built a proper one if he had remained in the house. . .', the kitchen having originally been a whaler's cottage. Other bank letters (2.1.51 and 14.4.53) show that Stephen had also built a store on Section 3 in Julia Street adjoining the back of another of his properties, the London Inn on the corner of Bentinck and Julia Street. It was from this store, on the south side of Julia Street, not from the blue-stone store still standing on Section 4, that Stephen must have conducted his business during the years of dispute.

housekeeping while semi-besieged, to the sound of the emigrants' axes and her husband's angry words; but he did add that Ann was 'anything but well, she suffers much from the toothache. She desires her kind love to you and Matilda'.

The Hentys' very understandable hope that further delay would be allowed, to give them a chance to buy their own buildings where they stood, was blighted by Blair's report to LaTrobe of the 'stand' taken by 'some of the family', a report sent on to Gipps (13.9.42) to show the 'character of the opposition which these Gentlemen think proper to make'. Gipps, while approving 'the conduct which has been pursued for the recovery of the Lands hitherto occupied by the Messrs Henty' wished to give the trespassers a last warning: they were to be notified that

though His Excellency would very much regret the necessity, it will be his duty, supposing that they put the Government to inconvenience or expense to look upon them as ineligible to hold land under the Crown in any capacity, that is to say by lease or licence.

This was serious indeed.

Still more serious was the general position in which the Hentys now found themselves. Dawning prosperity for them all in 1839, at the time of their father's death, had changed to threat of ruin in 1842. No more than any other settlers could the Hentys escape the depression of the early 'forties, affecting all the colonies but most acutely the Port Phillip district of New South Wales. There, the era of too rapid growth and fevered speculation in land and stock by individuals, businesses, and banks was followed by financial collapse. Reports of Mitchell's *Australia Felix*, with its limitless sheep-walks, had lured to its shores too many seekers of wealth through wool. Sheep, the basis of the Port Phillip economy, were no longer a profitable, even a saleable, commodity. In October 1841, when Stephen Henty was at Port Phillip, he spoke to Powlett, the auctioneer, about selling some sheep with 'right of station', as was the custom of that time; a month later he wrote from Portland to clinch the arrangement, asking Powlett to sell 10,000 sheep at £1 a head. A year earlier he might have got three or four times that sum: whether now they were sold for a pound or a few shillings or not at all there is nothing to show, but very soon

afterwards the Hentys had to face the fact that the local market was practically finished. As for the export market, for which only the wool was of value, the price in England had dropped while colonial wages soared, and wool now yielded less than it cost to produce. All six Hentys and their brother-in-law, Sam Bryan, were shareholders in the Portland Bay establishment, also Mrs. Thomas Henty as beneficiary under her husband's will: early in 1842 Sam Bryan and the three elder brothers living in Launceston took action to save the establishment from collapse. In August, after their investigations, William, the brother who knew least about the management of sheep and cattle but most about company affairs, set down the establishment's financial position in inescapable figures and anxious words. In a memorandum drawn up 'At Mother's House, Launceston',¹ and signed by James, Charles, and William Henty and Samuel Bryan, it was stated that

It is imperatively necessary, to save ourselves from being involved in Ruin, that the Expenses of the Establishment should be reduced at least Three thousand a Year—We have no other Chance for this but by keeping the Rams from the Ewes which would reduce the laborers one third. This arrangement is determined on not as an idle Threat, but with the most serious Resolution that the Ruin or otherwise of the whole Establishment depends upon it—and with every desire to protect the fortunes of all the Brothers, we entreat that every Assistance may be given to carry out this, under the guidance of Mr. Bryan. This being the most important point we put it in writing at once. The other arrangements respecting the Sales of every head of live Stock for which a purchaser can be found and of everything else saleable, requiring more detached Statements, must be written more at length. The difficulties will be great indeed but by the concurrence of all they may be (if we should be so fortunate) got through without being involved in inextricable confusion.

Obviously, the entreaty of this note was addressed to the younger brothers; also, the older ones clearly felt that in future Edward, John, and Francis must have the guidance of an older and more experienced man. The man was to be Bryan; the partnership was to be dissolved and the establishment divided

¹ In Cameron Street 'opposite the Bank of Australasia', where Mrs. Henty, Senior, would see respectable applicants for the post of housemaid for Portland Bay (*Laun. Ex.* 4.1.45).

anew, James, Charles, and William conferring on Bryan full powers to do whatever he thought best in allotting the sheep and cattle, putting an end to breeding, and making arrangements for future management of the stations. William's notes show the liabilities as nearly £23,000; the assets, considerably less, he set down as follows:

30,000 sheep (lambs given in) @ 9s.	. £13,500
1000 cattle @ £5	5,000
Horses, say 50	1,000
<i>Sally Ann</i>	700
	<hr/>
	£20,200
	<hr/>

There were also, at Red Hill, stock of a value unspecified and crops unthrashed, and there was the thoroughbred, Robin Hood, for which it was hoped, with unjustified optimism, to get £200. Red Hill was to be given up; the Swan River property, which apparently now yielded some rent, must be, said the memorandum, 'first retained to secure £300 a year to Mother' and then sold or divided. All proceeds of sales were to go towards paying off their debts, all brothers and Bryan to pay an equal share and the most pressing claims to be settled first. Amongst the lesser debts was one to Henty & Co. of Launceston, now consisting of James alone; almost the biggest due was to the firm of Buckles, the London merchants with whom James, as Henty & Co., chiefly traded.

While Thomas lived, he had held the family together. Without his affectionate interest and the binding influence of their respect for him as their head, and under the increasing strain of the hard times, family friction began. During the months of reorganization in 1842 William became dissatisfied with Francis and Edward; Edward, rebutting blame, implicated Francis and defended John; John made malicious remarks about Francis; Francis pointed to unfairness in the articles of partnership drawn up by William; Bryan, high-handed, refused information to William, who complained of being kept in the dark about his own sheep. And it seems that it must have been Bryan who brought John's participation in the establishment to an end. In this, Bryan merely made use of the powers granted him and he acted after visiting the stations and investigating affairs on

the spot. John's known fondness for drink may have led to a degree of mismanagement greater than could now be risked. There is no evidence of resentment of Bryan's decision except from John himself, who wrote to William with a flicker of defiance that surely covered wounded pride. 'I don't know what Bryan thinks of my part of the management', he said, 'but good or bad I am conscious that I have done my best and I don't care the snap of a finger what anybody says.' No longer at Merino Downs, he wrote to William from a neighbouring property that by chance bore the same name as the Hentys' grant on Oyster Harbour in the West, 'Retreat',¹ where as a youth John had lived in loneliness, and for too long. He detailed Bryan's arrangements: in lieu of John's share in the Portland Bay Establishment and his interest in the Swan River land, he was to be given 2,000 lambs, 100 two-tooth wethers with the wool on, 20 rams without the wool, 6 bullocks, 1 dray with yokes and bows, 12 cows and calves, 2 horses, 100 hurdles, 1 shepherd's watch-box and goods to the amount of about £12. With this arrangement he declared himself 'perfectly satisfied'. He still had debts to both Henty & Co. (£100) and Henty Brothers (amount not yet known) but hoped

with moderate luck to struggle on. I have got a run at the junction of the Wannon and the Glenelg but have not yet got a licence but have permission from Captain Fyans to have one. We left Merino Downs on the 15th September and have not the slightest regret at doing so on the contrary I feel as light as a feather and as fresh as the morning air.

His new run—his second chance—consisted of 12,000 acres of rich land; John called it Sandford, possibly from some association with the family of that name brought out in the *Caroline* by the Hentys and still employed by them. Edward, said John, was to go to Muntham to live, and Francis to Merino Downs. Muntham, with its 60,000 acres to the 14,000 of Merino Downs, and named after an old and well-groomed estate near Worthing,² was evidently regarded as the chief station; bordering both was another of 20,000 acres for which Edward had recently

¹ Retreat, on the Glenelg River, was then occupied by Thomas McCulloch (*Pastoral Pioneers*).

² When the Hentys knew it, it was the seat of F. W. Frankland, Esq., illustrated in *Horsfield*, vol. ii, p. 203.

taken out a licence and that he named Connell's Run. 'I dare-say', wrote John

[Frank] thinks he ought to have Muntham Station. I don't think so as he has been very little on it and it has been managed by Overseers consequently he has no more right to it than you. . . . I mention about Muntham because Frank thought it hard he could not have it, and I dare say will make a plaintive story to some parties in Launceston. I don't mention this from any ill will but only to prevent an erroneous impression in Launceston as I know very well there is very often great talk made about nothing up there.

John ended with his kind love to Matilda, in which Eliza joined. Poor Eliza, it is unlikely that she was light-hearted about the change, however jaunty John claimed to be. The Sandford land was rich and the site beautiful, facing the shapely green Downs rising across the valley of the Glenelg; but having to start again was a grievance that, whether felt by both of them or only one, shadowed the home that John now began to build. Nor was he to prove any more successful at Sandford than at Merino Downs.

That Frank should make his home in the interior and not merely manage the station from Portland Bay was evidently one of the economy measures imposed by Bryan. There is a hasty note from Frank at Merino Downs to Mary Ann at the Bay, written in August 1842 after arriving there with Bryan on the tour to reform the Wannon runs. They had ridden up, meeting Edward and Stephen on the way; Bryan now wanted his carpet-bag with all the accounts and a dray was to be dispatched to fetch it from the Bay. The dray took Frank's three-cornered note, charging Mary Ann to be particular about the carpet-bag (not forgetting the key) and warning her that arrangements concerning the stations were likely to be changed; he could not enter into them, but he saw 'no alternative but to live here'. How right was Bryan's view, and how well-fitted Frank was for the task, was to be shown by the development of Merino Downs in subsequent years. Meantime, however, it was an unwelcome ruling.

It was not only Frank who regretted having to take his young wife away from Portland Bay; it caused a small storm in the Lawrence household at Launceston—doubtless 'the parties' of John's dark allusions. Mrs. Lawrence, recently a widow, thought it unkind that her daughter should be carried so far beyond her

reach and perhaps also not quite fitting that Mary Ann, *née* Lawrence and town-bred, should be asked to rough it up the country; and Mrs. Lawrence let her resentment be known. Frank's mother, on the other hand, had no use for such lamentations and wrote to hearten Mary Ann.

Mrs. Thomas Henty
to her daughter-in-law,

Launceston. 12 January
1843

Mrs. Francis Henty, at Merino Downs.

My dear Mary Ann,

. . . I am rejoiced to hear such a good account of your health, a convincing proof that the country air agrees with you and at the same time that you do not make yourself unhappy in your new abode, nothing my dear Mary Ann can be a stronger proof of your good sense and proper feeling than this, altho I assure you when Frank was married I had no idea of his living up the Country, nor had Frank I am sure, as he told me he had not, if I *had* I think I should not have consented to his marrying Miss Lawrence, fearing she would not be happy there never having been accustomed to living in the country, but as he is a *little bit* beyond my control I suppose he would not have waited for my consent, but indeed dear girl I have much reason to be pleased with his choice, particularly since I hear you are happy in the country and your health good. Mr. Bryan told me you were just the wife for Frank, that you would have preferred living where you could see your good Mama occasionally there can be no doubt, but when circumstances beyond your control render it necessary for your Husband to remain where he is (for some time at all events) you do indeed act wisely to make up your mind to it, at the same time I see no reason why you should not come up and see your Mama and I hope Frank will be able to accomplish it before the summer is over.

I am not in the least surprized that Mrs. Lawrence should have felt most keenly your long absence, and I really felt for her, but it would have been better if she could have restrained her feelings a little, as I cannot find that there is any one to blame in it, it is entirely the times which makes it almost impossible to sell at any price. I assure you I have heard Mrs. Frank Henty applauded for following her husband where he was destined to go, I wish Mrs. Lawrence had done the same in her letters to you, it would have been more likely to have added to your happiness and I am fearful from what I heard her say that she wrote rather despondingly, but I am in hopes she is got over it a good deal, for she talks very charmingly about you now. I have seen her sometimes lately, and I am to

dine with her tomorrow at Shum's. Susey and I often talk of you dear Mary Ann and I assure you we want to see dear Frank and you very much. We did not forget you on your Wedding day. . . I shall not send you any preserves this time as no doubt your Mama will and Mrs. Bryan intends to do so I know. I have heard Frank does not look well I fear he has had a good deal of worry with his business, I hear an excellent account of his Wool.

Not long afterwards, Frank brought Mary Ann across the Strait to see her Mama, both remaining in Launceston for more than a month.

It was while the Hentys were trying to straighten out their worries that they made the tangle worse so far as it related to Superintendent LaTrobe. In August 1842 LaTrobe had in one respect relaxed the order to remove their improvements from Section 4 of Portland town. In response to a request from the Rev. Mr. Yelverton Wilson, pastor of the Portland adherents of the Church of England, who were still without a church, one building, a store built by the Hentys and now set apart for public worship, was allowed to remain provided that it was used for worship and nothing else. Just after making this concession he heard from Blair that the brothers were still resisting the magistrate's order to remove everything else; moreover they denied having received official notice to give up the land and claimed that they had permission to stay until it was sold. The statements, made by Francis, were sternly refuted by LaTrobe, with a reminder of the verbal arrangement with Stephen and the despatches, known to Blair and the Hentys, resulting from that conversation. The case was perfectly plain: the Hentys had become intruders on 2 March last. Possibly, said LaTrobe, Stephen had had no part in Mr. F. Henty's letter but the conduct of the parties could not be considered otherwise than 'exceeding improper' and prevented his recommending to His Excellency Mr. F. Henty's request for still further indulgence. A letter from Edward, stating the case as he saw it, followed Frank's; LaTrobe promised it every consideration but declined to enter into discussion. The Superintendent had come to the conclusion that there were too many Hentys and that they wrote too many letters: as he wrote to Stephen,

My own belief is that much of the difficulty which has arisen and perhaps the whole of the misunderstanding and unpleasant discus-

sion have proceeded from the circumstance of so many of your family becoming parties to them. Would you therefore allow me to suggest that either in conducting a correspondence on this or any other subject with Her Majesty's Government, it may be determined among you which of the family may be addressed as the representative of your interests.

These words of counsel found Stephen in Melbourne, whither he had hastened once more. Since he now asked LaTrobe to furnish him with copies of the correspondence, it seems that he had not seen the letters of either Francis or Edward written from the Bay, but only the official reproofs they had called forth; at the time of the brothers' letters (and it was the time of Edward's return from the interior in obstructive mood), Stephen must still have been absent up country, busy with Bryan and choosing, as his wife said he did, the site for John's station, Sandford, decided on at this date. Stephen was not shown the letters, for LaTrobe declined to produce them, though in phrases that prove he had no quarrel with Stephen; his reason for refusing was that he had had yet another letter from yet another Henty, this time William, with information that was confirmed officially from Sydney and that changed the whole situation.

News from England had come at last. In consequence of a despatch to Gipps from the Secretary of State, dated 27 May 1842, of which the terms were not as yet divulged, in October LaTrobe was desired by Gipps to stay proceedings against the Messrs. Henty in their occupation of Crown Lands at Portland until further intimation of His Excellency's pleasure. LaTrobe replied that he would take the earliest opportunity of sending these directions to the police magistrate at Portland, but he feared that the buildings in question would already have been removed—as, indeed, they partly had. LaTrobe's relief at the truce to hostilities is clear; he hastened to inform William ('for your satisfaction') that instructions had been sent to Blair to take no further action. 'I shall regret it', he assured William, 'if the steps which previously it appeared imperative to take in regard to your removal . . . should prove disadvantageous to the interests of your family'. William's own information, sent by him to LaTrobe as well as to Gipps, had come to him from their agents in the matter, Keddle, Baker & Grant. From Mr. Baker

William had learnt that the Hentys were to be allowed to remain where they had squatted—but at a price; and as the price was to be fixed by the Colonial Government how far there was cause for even moderate rejoicing it was not possible to judge until the attitude of Gipps and his Executive Council became known. William was pessimistic; Francis, at Merino Downs, wrote that he was more sanguine than William as regards the amount of compensation,

but I suppose you do not like to raise our expectations too high. I think myself Sir G. Gypps will give us nothing if he could get out of it but I do not see how he can avoid it. A good round sum would be very acceptable to the Family just now.

The *Portland Guardian*—for the news was quickly public property—had no doubts at all. On 22 October, while Stephen was absent in Melbourne, its editor announced under the heading of JUSTICE that

The claims, now several years pending, of which the Messrs Henty Brothers, after the unfavorable decision to which Sir George Gipps had come, have been again referred back for the reconsideration of the Colonial Government by Lord Stanley, and are therefore likely to be promptly settled in favor of the enterprising gentlemen who have so long and so unjustly been kept out of their rights.

WILLIAM'S STORY

THE Governor's despatch to the Secretary of State, with its enclosures concerning the Hentys' claims, had left Sydney in April 1840. It was two and a half years later that the verdict on the case came back to Gipps. The arguments of Keddle, Baker & Grant and, gossip said, the persuasions of the Duke of Richmond and the Member for Sussex, Mr. Darby,¹ had had their effect. Lord Stanley, at the time in charge of the Colonial Office, informed Gipps that he was of opinion

that the concluding part of the letter of Lord Aberdeen to Lord Surry contains an implied promise of a favorable consideration of the claims of the Messrs Henty in reference to such portions of the land in question as might be actually under cultivation and fenced.

With respect, therefore, to any Lands that may be proved to come within this description, I am prepared so far to alter the former decisions on this claim, as to authorize you either to allow the parties a pre-emption of such lands at the amount which it may be estimated that they would now realize without any improvements upon them, or if they have already been sold, to pay to the Messrs Henty the difference between that estimated value and the price actually received by the Government. The value to be assumed for the purpose of this arrangement will be determined by the Local Authorities, having regard to the price fetched by adjacent or similar lots in an unimproved state, and to any other circumstances that they may find ought to be taken into account in order to arrive at a correct and equitable conclusion.

The despatch finished with a warning paragraph designed to protect the Governor and his Council from any other possible applicants. 'I wish', said Stanley,

distinctly to explain to you, that my judgment in this case proceeds on the expectation which the words employed in a former letter of the Secretary of State relating exclusively to the Messrs Henty, may be supposed to have created in their minds, and that therefore the decision is not to be viewed as a general precedent or as opening the door to the wide extent of demands which, I observe it was at one

¹ Letter among *Henty Family Papers*.

time feared in the Council might arise out of a concession to this application.

Had the Hentys won, or had they lost? They had lost, in so far as they were *not* to be allowed to keep their land, except by purchase: they had won, in so far as they *were* to receive compensation, the right to which the Governor-in-Council had refused. But the compensation was to be only partial, since the method stipulated for assessing it would almost certainly yield them only a small sum. The decision was disappointing to the Hentys and at the same time vexatious to Gipps.

The first step necessary was to determine the extent of the land involved. To give the authorities information on this point William was summoned to Sydney to appear before the Governor and Executive Council. On 6 December 1842 William and Matilda left George Town for Sydney in the steamer *Sea Horse*. He carried with him a note to Gipps from Van Diemen's Land's governor, Sir John Franklin; as a fellow passenger with Mr. W. Henty in the *Fairlie*, Sir John said he had

had the opportunity of forming a knowledge of him and of entertaining a regard for his character which I have ever since preserved. I know not a more highly respected person than he is. I hesitate not therefore in requesting the favour of introducing him to your Excellency.

It does not seem like William to accept such a letter and not deliver it, but there it is among his papers, so perhaps he faced the Governor without such help as the recommendation might have been. Also among his papers is his own account of the Sydney experience, a record that brings colour to the minutes of the executive council that describe William's interviews in formal black and white.

The *Sea Horse*, a vessel of 243 tons, made the passage in five days. William spent the time working at the speech he meant to deliver to the Governor and his council, and in studying the *New South Wales Almanack*, Busby's *On the Cultivation of the Vine*, and Wilberforce's *Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System of Professed Christians in the Higher and Middle Classes of this Country Contrasted with Real Christianity*. A call was made at Twofold Bay, on the east coast of the mainland, and here, while wood was cut to replenish the *Sea Horse's* fuel, natives paddled

out in their canoes to exchange fish for tobacco and mouldy loaves. As William had not until now left Launceston—not even to visit Portland Bay—since his arrival in 1837, this was his first sight of the mainland aborigine, so different from any he may have seen of the sick remnants of the natives of Van Diemen's Land.

On Friday afternoon, 9 December, the *Sea Horse* anchored at Darling Harbour, Sydney—'the place busy with shipping and a thronging mass of people'. William carefully noted the journey's costs: passage money for himself and Matilda, £16, and an additional £1 for freight for luggage ('a great imposition'), £1. 9s. 3d. 'for my eating and drinking on board', £1. 8s. 0d. 'ditto for Matilda', and 3s. 6d. for the steward. The first glimpse of Sydney's appearance was disappointing: it was

not so pretty as I expected, as on the side of Darling Harbour the shore rises abruptly and high, the houses standing one above the other like Malta is said to be, and the streets not being finished display rocks and quarries. When you get over this hill, you descend into the Town with George Street running through its centre from the end of Sydney Cove, a length of a couple of miles, the houses high, large and crowded together, like a London street. On getting to the south side of the Cove, you come upon the open Grounds, forming the Domain (with the Governor's House), Hyde Park, etc., and farther on the Suburb of Woolloomooloo, which has Villas of a large class, with a few acres, commanding extensive views of the Port and its various Coves and of the Town. The Domain has beautiful walks and drives laid out with great care extending round the Head of two coves, and at the Head of another Cove is the Botanic Gardens planted all over with exotics, and native Trees, with well kept walks throughout. It is a beautiful place of resort—the vegetation very striking. . . .

The diary contains no note of hotel expenses, and almost certainly the Hentys stayed at the home of their brother-in-law, the leading barrister, Mr. Richard Windeyer. Next morning, piloted by Mr. Windeyer, William started off on the first stage of his business.

Saturday 10th. Introduced by Windeyer to Colonial Secretary (E. D. Thomson) a kindly and gentlemanly Secretary, he fixed Monday to see me and recommended my calling on the Governor—proceeded to Government House, and on sending in my name to

ask the Governor to make an appointment, he sent for me instant, was very abrupt—though intending, I thought, to be civil—made objections and difficulties, but wanted me to send my papers—Did so in a few hours.

William and Matilda spent Sunday in church and Sunday school, as they did at home and loved to do. St. James's Church displeased:

The Te Deum and the whole of the Psalms chaunted—too much chaunting—in particular the Psalms happened to be Prayers and the chaunting of them was clearly inappropriate. But it is the Bishop's doing.

The bishop, Dr. William Broughton,¹ was to hold an ordination on the next Sunday: 'to chain an audience', wrote William, the Bishop introduces it into the midst of the Service. He used to have it after the Service, but as some of the Congregation left, he was greatly offended and so made the alteration. The Number of Churches in Sydney, 4, the Population 40,000.

Next morning, William went seriously to work.

Monday 12. called on the Colonial Secretary. Met a very civil Reception. He had all the Correspondence and papers from London before him, which he promised to read tonight or tomorrow morning. I left a brief abstract of our occupations and Improvements which he read immediately, and I must call on him again on Wednesday. He gave me hopes of the Matter's being completed this week, which as Sir George comes into town [from his Parramatta residence] only on Friday is pretty expeditious. Mr. Hart [Inspector of the Bank of Australasia] kindly sent his Carriage for a ride for me and Matilda at 4—so we went round the Domain and afterwards to Shepherd's Nursery (now Anderson's). . . . Camellias 5s. each, they say they are very difficult to rear.

On Friday the Governor failed to appear in Sydney, so on Saturday William

started off to see His Excellency at Parramatta, got there at $\frac{1}{4}$ before 4. The servant having told me that I was after hours, and requiring to know if my business was special, I was ushered in to the Governor who was at his desk. I apologised for calling after hours which arose from my having expected to see him in Town till late in the morning.

¹ William Grant Broughton (1788–1853), first Anglican bishop in Australia and a member of the governor's legislative and executive councils. His diocese had included Van Diemen's Land until 1842 (*Serle*).

He said he had not been able to do anything in my business. He had not heard from Mr. LaTrobe and he expected it would be necessary to have an answer from him before the Papers could be completed. I told him that I was informed by Mr. Thomson this morning that the Papers were quite complete. He took no notice but went on saying (as he said on the onset) that I could not expect him to postpone other business to attend to this one thing. He then said he would be in Town next Tuesday and Wednesday—That he had summoned the Council for Tuesday. I enquired if that was the Council at which I should have to attend. He said he could not tell. He then jumped up—and I walked as hard as I could to the door. He began muttering, when he saw me near the door and as I did not pause he wished me a polite Good Morning, Mr. Henty, which I returned by Good Morning, *Sir*, and shut the door.

Not a happy beginning. And it had cost William £1. 1s. 6d. for chaise-hire, 1s. for toll-gates, besides 3s. 6d. for horse-feed and 5s. for teas.

Monday 19th. My interview on Saturday gave me much uneasiness. I began to think I might have to return to Launceston as I came. I therefore wrote a Letter to the Governor explaining that I was led from the Colonial Secretary's Letter of the 22nd Nov^r to understand that the Matter was *then* under the Consideration of the Council, and requested him to excuse my urging the Matter etc. from my lengthened absence and distance from home. On calling on the Colonial Secretary however I was assured that the Governor *had* had all the Papers before him and that they had been circulated amongst the Council and Mr. Merewether, the Clerk of the Council, told me the Summonses were out for Tuesday, but whether my business was to be on, they could not say. I suspect it will be and must at any rate hold myself in readiness to attend on the instant.

22nd Dec^r. On the whole I have every Reason to be satisfied with the hearing that has been afforded me by the Council. Sir George himself has shewn me no favor I am satisfied, though careful not to lie under the Imputation of refusing to give me a hearing. After telling me on Saturday that he could not give me any Intelligence whether the Council at their proposed meeting on Tuesday would go on with the Consideration of our Case or not he suddenly at $\frac{1}{2}$ past one on the Tuesday (20th) sends me a Summons to wait on the Council at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 2. As it happened I received the Note immediately and was of course prepared.—When shewn in there were present—Sir George at the head of the Table and Mr. Merewether the Clerk of Council at the Bottom, with Mr. E. Deas Thomson (Col. Secre-

tary) Sir Maurice O'Connell [Commander of the Forces] Mr. Riddell (Col. Treasurer) and Sir Tho^s Mitchell (the latter to afford information he having visited Portland Bay). The Bishop unluckily was not present and *he I believe is* the most independent of the Council, besides being more intelligent.—Sir George had maps before him. He first put a demand on me for mine which I avoided (as being under conditions with—from whom it had been obtained not to shew it) They then looked out the locality of our Lands and Stations, the Situation of our Enclosures as regarded the future spread of the Town, the quantity cultivated and fenced, the quantity so fenced that had been sold by the Government, the Price of land sold, as to the Time of our Improvements being made, whether they were all made before we received Notice from the Crown of their Intention to dispossess us. How many of my Brothers resided there, if any were married, if any of the married ones lived up the Country, (to which I could fortunately reply, 3) whether the Buildings up the Country were better than those of Squatters. I said Yes. Sir George turned round—Have you seen any of our Squatters buildings, Mr Henty—which of course I had not (I had said on the onset, I had not been at the Bay) at which he caught and questioned me, who *had been there*, and seemed less eager when I said I had 4 married Brothers there. Sir Thomas Mitchell said the most valuable Town land was that away from our possessions—towards the Sea, though the Surveyors had marked out our blocks the other way. Sir George wanted my opinion but I would not give it and referred it at once to Sir Thomas M. as having been there whilst I had not. Sir George kept making his remarks as we went on and though they were made *at* me and as if meant for a Reply, there was so much talking going on that I was troubled to get much in. Sir George said at one time, I wonder you didn't take in the whole Country.

He after the maps had been examined, opened the case by reading out Lord Aberdeen's letter, commenting as he went on. He got down to where the last Paragraph commences, with much satisfaction. Now, says he, if Lord Aberdeen had stopped there there would have been no dispute about the matter, that is as clear a refusal made twice over as could be—etc. etc. But because Lord Aberdeen was writing to another Lord, or because like some other official persons he wanted to soften down a little, a positive refusal, he adds this—(the last Paragraph) dwelling on the words 'I am not prepared to say'. He rung the changes on this and as soon as I could well be heard I took it up—I said I could explain the difference between the two parts of the letter exactly, the first was, I admit, a complete refusal of my Father's application, there was no doubt of it—my

Father had asked for an unconditional Grant of 20,000 acres which was declined and the Reason was that not long before, Mr. Peel had had a Million of Acres given him at Swan River without any Condition. His Lordship having this in Remembrance refused to give my Father his land unconditionally—but he goes on to name the Conditions, Such Lands as should be actually brought into Cultivation, and surrounded etc., actually you see with what precision he writes—that there should be no doubt or dispute as to the Terms on which our Pretensions should be favorably considered: (*Should be* said Sir George turning round) I remarked also on the [under]scoring of the lines, etc. that upon this we had drawn our Conclusions and expended our Money in Improvements, none of which was laid out till after we were in possession of Lord Aberdeen's letter.

The Bishop not having arrived Sir George soon after shut up his Papers when there was a Pause of several minutes, he turning his back on me. He afterwards made up his mind to look half round and say If you have anything Mr. Henty to *say* As the whole matter however had been gone over pretty thoroughly in this conversational way I thought it not better to weary them by further speechifying except in calling their attention to our being removed from possession. This they were anxious to disprove—Mr. Thomson turned to his dates and Sir George to the Letter itself authorising Mr. LaTrobe to stay [proceedings]. I said that letter was too late, that the House was dismantled etc. and the doors and window cases removed. They did not credit this and wanted to know where my Brother lived then, which I had to explain by saying that he had bought other Land at the Government Sales. . . .

As recorded in the Council Minutes, William submitted the following list of lands fenced and cultivated by the Hentys before they had learned of the Government's intention to resume:

At Cape Bridgewater	14 acres
Mount Eckersley	13 „
Merino Downs, south of the Wannon	35 „
North of the Wannon	20 „
In the Town of Portland	47 „
Garden ground in the Suburbs of the town	2½ „
Total	<u>131½ acres</u>

Of the 47 acres of Town Land, 4 to 5 acres had been resumed and sold for an average price of £550 per acre.

William and Sir Thomas Mitchell having withdrawn, further consideration by the Council was deferred until two o'clock next day. Before then, William remembered something that he had left out of his statement—that the $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres of garden ground had been resumed and sold for £75 an acre; on Deas Thomson's advice, the hour of the meeting found him at the council door and he was soon called in.

Sir George directed me to a seat at his Elbow as before. The whole Council was present, Sir George began by saying he understood I had something more that I wished to say to the Council—I said there was a small quantity of Land in the Suburbs that had been sold from us—he said he had got that from Mr. Thomson—finding I would not proceed till that was disposed of he began asking me the Value of it, whether it sold for more in consequence of our Improvements etc. He then again said that if I had anything to remark upon I might proceed—I rose, but he checked me, thinking I believe that I was about to retire and not dreaming that I was going to speak on my Legs. He again informed me that I was to make such observations as I was desirous of doing. I got up, he looked round at me as if he were utterly astonished. His manner was disconcerting and disturbed me so that I could not get into my subject. He however then looked away and the others did the same.

William, the Governor's dark eyes averted, apparently managed something of his prepared speech. He reiterated that the Hentys could not be regarded as squatters, referred to his father's having attained prominence in England as a breeder of merino sheep—'one of the very few in England who had (Sir George here turned round and gave me such a Stare)' and to his importation of 'large numbers of merinos—between 2 and 3 hundred'; and emphasized the permanent nature of the establishment begun by direction of his father and carried on by the sons.

After William's withdrawal, the Council 'attentively considered the papers and Mr. Henty's statements' and came to the conclusion that there was no way out of it, since

the Instruction of Lord Stanley pointed out clearly enough the course of the proceeding which should be adopted; the only difficulty will be in fixing the price which should be paid by the Messrs Henty for the Land. . . .¹

¹ *Council Minute Book (M.L.).*

How, indeed, was 'the average price' to be found? There had only been one sale, when the inflated sum of £550 an acre had been paid, and 'in consequence of the altered circumstances of the Colony'—i.e. the depression—'it could not be expected that this average would be maintained, whilst no data existed wherein to form any other average'.

Before adjourning for the brief Christmas vacation

The Council thought it due to themselves to put on record that in the opinion above expressed they did not intend in any way to rescind or recall the opinions which they recorded when the case of Mr. Henty was last before them. In this case, as in that of the Port Phillip Association, they considered that a deviation from the long-established and well-known practice of this Government in respect to the occupation of Crown Lands, to be justifiable only under the express orders of the Secretary of State.

On second thoughts this statement was not good enough for Bishop Broughton. At the next meeting he desired to record his dissent from the Council's decision to do as they were told and allow the Hentys the right of pre-emption: he felt (1) that it might be against the public interest and unfair to others refused the same indulgence and (2) that Mr. Henty had misinterpreted Lord Aberdeen's letter. If William had known of this minority opinion he must have conceded the bishop's independence but would have grudged him the reputation for more intelligence than the other members of the council.

Christmas is left out of William's account, but he and Matilda spent it at Tomago on the Hunter River, Richard Windeyer's farm. Before leaving town they did a little shopping—a Blouze,¹ 12s. 6d., a New Hat, £1. 10s., an umbrella, £1. 1s., pumps 9s., some oranges, a haircut 1s., and some books. On Boxing Day, no doubt leaving the two sisters at Tomago to gossip of old friends and to exchange comfortably unguarded opinions of new, Windeyer and William went off to inspect a neighbouring dairy and some farms and vineyards on the Williams River.

On Monday, 2 January, William again visited the governor at Parramatta, this time travelling by river steamer, a less extravagant mode of transport that, including refreshments at

¹ And by chance we know that at Tomago Matilda would be obliged to call it a Blooze—a glimpse, through a descendant, of Maria Windeyer's forceful ways and inexorable rules of etiquette.

the end of the journey, cost him only 10s. 6d. Gipps saw him, and told him Lord Stanley's despatch was clear but the price was the problem—to ask the Hentys for £550 an acre he said

would be only laughing at us, as the Price was the most out of the Way of any that had occurred. . . . He was now waiting for Intelligence from Mr. LaTrobe as to the Value which might fairly be put upon the Land according to the present Times.

As to the country lands, Sir George said he would allow the Hentys to remain for the present as they did not as yet interfere with the Government, and 'he could not look upon us in any other light but that of Squatters'. Gipps then offered to let William have a copy of Stanley's despatch, but next day, to William's chagrin, Thomson would neither give him a copy nor show him one. An attested copy was, however, acquired later and remains among other Henty papers, decorated on its outside fold with a giant exclamation mark and endorsed in James's hand.

William's Sydney journal ends on a note of doubt: as to the price to be paid, would it be better to wait for the Council to communicate its views, or better for William to make an offer from the Hentys first? If the second, would it be more prudent to trouble the Council by a speech or merely send a letter? He decided to write. It seems that after all he did neither, and he and Matilda sailed for Launceston on 12 January, passengers once more in the *Sea Horse*. It chanced that two days before their departure a ship, the *John Woodall*, arrived from England after a voyage of nearly five months; among her passengers were Matilda's widowed sister, Mrs. Baker, and her little daughter, come to live in New South Wales. Thus, if William himself had not gained all he had hoped from Gipps and had found the episode unnerving, Matilda owed a happy experience to the Governor, for the vice-regal summons to William had brought about the reunion of Matilda, Maria, and Ann, three of the four Camfield sisters, after a separation of nearly eight years.

At the end of May 1843 Gipps was in a position to put before his Council certain definite proposals for the settlement of the Henty case, proposals based on a joint report from Blair, the police magistrate, and Tyers, the surveyor, on the value of the

lands claimed. Gipps suggested that the 82 acres of country land fenced and cultivated by the Hentys should be granted to them at £2 an acre, twice the established minimum price—‘and when it was borne in mind that they were all small and choice lots, His Excellency considered such a price to be a moderate one’. He further proposed that in the case of the town lands

the Messrs Henty, on yielding up all claim to the Lands which have been sold or otherwise appropriated, should have all the Lands they claim at one hundred pounds (£100) per acre, or as much of what they claim as they choose to take at that price. . . .

Lastly, the Governor proposed that the Hentys should be allowed £118 as compensation for the damage done to their house. With one or two provisos the Council agreed to settlement in the way suggested, and the offer started off on its journey to the expectant William, through Superintendent LaTrobe.

Gipps now seems to have taken a rest from considering the case of the Messrs Henty. To him, it must have been of small importance compared to the other problems in which he was immersed. Among these, and the most important, were the coming elections to the legislative council, no longer to consist exclusively of the governor's own nominees. The first step towards responsible government in the Australian Colonies had recently been taken by the British Parliament in passing an Act for the Government of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land. Under the Act, the Port Phillip District was to elect its own representatives, a concession to the clamour by Port Phillip for a greater share of official attention and expenditure of public funds—a concession that it was hoped would still the already audible demand for Port Phillip's separation from the older parts of New South Wales and erection into a colony in its own right. This important Act and the instructions for putting it into effect had reached Gipps on 1 January: William's visit to Parramatta on 2 January, to claim the attention of a governor unwilling and now even more overworked, could hardly have fallen on a less propitious day. The Act was proclaimed the next week, and at once, while William was still in Sydney, the morning papers were full of stately addresses to Worthy and Independent Electors and of letters, both stately and abusive, galore. William and Matilda's host, Richard Windeyer, was

a prospective candidate¹ and Stephen, as they learnt on their return to Launceston, had been asked by 'a respectable and influential' body of Port Phillip's electors to allow his nomination as candidate for one of the district's five provincial seats. Stephen, 'said to be as firm an advocate of separation as he is known to be a man of talent and business habits',² declined nomination, to the great regret of Portland Bay:³ it was impossible for him to leave his home and affairs to attend a council sitting more than 800 land miles away. But though he could not offer himself as a candidate he was not too absorbed in his own business to take part in the country's first election; he publicly solicited the support of the electors, so far as they could give it 'honestly and fearlessly', in favour of the four candidates, all residents of Sydney, best qualified in Stephen's view to advocate Portland's interests with zeal and success.⁴ Nor did he stand aloof from the excitement of polling day, when the palings of the post-office carried posters and, as the *Guardian* reported, the town's signal staffs were 'decorated with the utmost tastefulness—Mr. Henty's in particular, bearing two complete sets of Marryat's signals'. Portland cast its votes as Stephen wished, but by the combined votes of the whole Port Phillip District—1323 in all⁵—one of the four he favoured, Sir Thomas Mitchell, failed to secure a seat.⁶

¹ Windeyer was elected, and added the exertions of a leading politician to the strain of a big practice at the bar. Overworked, ill, and in the prevailing financial straits, in 1847 he took a voyage to Launceston where James Henty helped him ashore, shocked by his appearance, and where he died 2.12.47. Richard and Maria Windeyer's only child, later Sir William Charles Windeyer, became Chief Justice of N.S.W. and other descendants have contributed to Australian public life in various ways (*Serle*; James Henty's *Diary*, 1847).

² *P. Ph. Gaz.* 21.1.43; *Laun. Ex.* 28.1.43.

³ *Port. Guard.* 4.2.43.

⁴ *Ibid.* 17.6.43. The candidates Stephen supported were Nicholson, Mitchell, Ebden, and Walker.

⁵ *Victorian Historical Magazine*, vol. ix, May 1923.

⁶ Next year Mitchell was elected to fill a vacancy among the representatives of Port Phillip but soon found that the duties were incompatible with the office of surveyor-general, and he resigned. He had been knighted in England during a visit for the purpose of publishing his account of his two expeditions. Now the father of ten children, he applied to the Home Government for compensation for his exertions in exploring, asking either 15,000 acres or £20,000, an estimation of the value of his services that shocked the Secretary of State. Mitchell eventually received a gratuity of £1061. 6s. 4d. (MSS., *M.L.*) Mitchell carried out further explorations 1845–7, publishing an account, *Journal of an Expedition into the Interior of Tropical Australia* (1848) (*Serle*).

A week after publishing the election results, the *Portland Guardian*, reverting to domestic topics, announced that the Hentys' land claims were settled at last. Retracting the statement in the next issue (27.7.43) the leading article enriched its comments with derision of the proposed terms of settlement and with personal abuse of Gipps. The sentiments may be taken as a crude reflection of the Hentys' own views. After some three months, presumably filled with family discussions on both sides of the Strait, William wrote to LaTrobe to reject the terms. The exact reasons for rejection remain unknown, since William's letter is one of the many Henty papers missing from the official files, but it is easy to conclude that the Hentys were taken aback by both the small amount of compensation offered and the large amount of purchase money asked. Perhaps Gipps was irritated by the manner of their protests, or the nature of their alternative proposals, or merely by their continued resistance to his will: whatever the reason, he ignored William's letter and LaTrobe's covering despatch for more than a year.

JAMES'S STORY

MEANWHILE, through the rest of 1843 and to the end of 1844, the brothers had to carry on their lives with the land problem unresolved. In the case of the town lands uncertainty must have been inconvenient both for the Hentys and for Portland itself: according to the *Portland Guardian*, public improvements and extensions were at a standstill while the ownership of so much of the town was in dispute. But so far as the country lands were concerned, official silence was perhaps at least partly to the good—Edward at Muntham and Frank at Merino Downs knew that in that still sparsely settled region they need expect no government interference as yet and could therefore thankfully postpone until better times the difficult business of raising purchase money for the acres enclosed. And up the country by the beginning of 1844 better times could already be foreseen. A January entry in James's diary noted that

the letters from Portland Bay exhibit more confidence on the part of the Sheep farmers. Frank says that his wool at 9*d.* per lb. will pay all expenses and that at a shilling it will have a good profit without selling a Sheep. This is good news and I hope is the beginning of some improvement in that quarter.

It was by James himself, in Launceston and struggling in the trough of the depression, that the family's financial uncertainty was most felt. As far back as 1841 his mother had described him as 'quite down', and there had been two years of anxiety since then. His business was largely as a shipper of the staple commodities, wool, wheat, and oil for sale by his London agents, Buckles & Co; the whale fisheries were declining and the English prices for wheat and wool had fallen so low that James did not see how the settlers, most of them deeply in debt, could meet the interest on the sums they owed. On 30 June 1843 he wrote,

This day ends the half year and a most miserable one it has been with reference to business matters. The embarrassment amongst all classes engaged in Trade, Commerce Agriculture or Stock-holding

exists in all its force and without some decided improvement in prices for produce of most kinds during the next six months it will be found impossible for many to stand up against the times. Those who have large Interest to pay cannot stand and although they may be propped for a time by the well disposed Banks yet in the end I fear it must end in utter Insolvency. The prospect is altogether most gloomy and for those who have families to educate and provide for distressing, requiring courage of no ordinary nature to bear.

Van Diemen's Land still regarded itself as the granary for New South Wales, mainly devoted to the production of wool; now, the Sydney wheat market could not help the Van Diemen's Land farmers much, for in June what hopes there were of sales were shattered by the arrival of wheat ships from South America, one cargo being sold at 2*s.* 9*d.* when the Sydney price of Van Diemen's Land wheat was 4*s.* 11*d.* In November, as their 1843 crops grew, the hopes of the island's farmers lifted again with news of hot winds destroying the grain at Melbourne and Sydney; but later their own crops proved light or failed altogether for want of rain. In any case, ill winds in New South Wales blew little good to Van Diemen's Land while inter-colonial markets were hampered as they were by customs duties and by jealousy as well: the English market was their chief hope, despite the corn laws that imposed higher duties on Australian than on Canadian wheat.

On the last day of 1843 James wrote that settlers could not sell except at prices 50% less than the cost of production, Wheat being 3/- a bushel, oats 1/8, Barley 3/-, Fat Sheep 7/- cattle at the same rate. Wool is the only thing saleable and good flocks command 11*d.* to 12*d.* per lb. The effect of this deplorable state of things is to wind up many large Land holders and to cause the Transfer of his property to the Mortgagor,

the former owner becoming the mortgagor's tenant. For men like himself, extensively engaged in business, the past year had been

one of unmitigated anxiety . . . and the difficulties of the Times have been such as almost to overwhelm the majority. Creditors are in most instances rapacious in pressing for their own, the Money Lender not less so,

but nobody could pay their debts for there was not 'a spark of profitable Trade or business of any kind'.

Time, James persuaded himself, must bring a change for the better; he was convinced, therefore, that each year of depression that passed brought the country nearer to recovery. But time passed too slowly to save some; one after another, merchants and men of business went down. In the middle of 1844 there was 'constant excitement in Town in consequence of the repeated failures'; and the almost daily meetings of creditors depressed James 'nearly beyond bearing'. Through his diary runs a threnody on the death, commercially speaking, of Launceston men of business like himself, a lamentation that betrays increasing anxiety as the months go by. Nervous apprehension and persistent headaches interfere with his attention to business and keep him awake at night, driving him to study Dr. Bains's *Anatomy of Sleep*. Almost overcome by the difficulties that surround him, he wonders what is to be the end, and his 'worst fears predominate'. Recording the departure from Launceston of a bankrupt friend and his family, he asks 'How long is it before a similar result may fall on me?' It is obvious that James's 'fearful foreboding as to the state of the times' was at least partly due to the state of his own affairs.

How much of what was troubling him did James confide to his wife? One does not picture him as a skilful dissimulator but probably he hid what he could of the gravity of his fears. Charlotte, though only thirty-six, was now in indifferent health; their seventh child, a daughter, had been prematurely born at the end of 1843. Of his wife, James wrote in his diary on that day: 'God grant that she may get safely over this period and be a solace and comfort to me and her children for many a long year.' On the thirteenth anniversary of their wedding he wrote that he was determined for once to dispel the prevailing gloom and enjoy himself with his family, the family he loved so passionately—Henry, Herbert, Tommy, Fanny, Mary Jane, Emily, and the delicate Susan. He rode out often to Franklin Village to visit the boys at school; in the holidays he played cricket, fished and shot with them and every May he took them to see the Queen's Birthday Review; frequently, he drove Mama and all the girls to visit Jane and Sam Bryan at Strathmore. When the family was all well and happy, he thanked God; when one or other of them looked pale, or was debilitated or in pain, he noted it in his diary, and he it was, not 'Mama', who ad-

ministered the blue pill, the ipecacuanha wine, or the quinine, arranged the change of air and the sea-bathing at George Town or Kelso, timed the putting-off of the winter flannel and combated convulsions with the hot mustard bath. In common with all other parents bringing up their children in the undrained colonial towns of that day, with abounding flies, mosquitoes, cold winds, and dust, James and Charlotte had much to fear: the incidence of unnamed sickness was high among both children and adults; in Launceston, epidemics of scarlet fever, dysentery, typhoid, and European cholera were threats to every household and at times deaths were so frequent that the melancholy sound of the tolling knell was noted in James's diary almost every day.

Through these depression years, while anxieties pressed upon James both in the counting-house and at home, his work had to go on. Each spring, wool was brought into the town from the country and landed from Portland Bay; together with oil and whalebone, wattle-bark and tallow—that new export commodity gained from boiling down surplus stock¹—the wool was loaded at Henty's wharf for shipment to the London markets, whose smallest fluctuations were noted by James whenever English news came in. In January 1844 there were more vessels loading for London than James had ever known—six barques and three brigs. With the departure of the *Robert Matthews* for London in October, James's shipment of wool to Buckles for the season totalled 4,139 bales, 'a consignment unequalled in Van Diemen's Land, and this besides Sperm and Black Oil, Bark, Wheat, Tallow etc.' Vessels bought or built or chartered, windbound, over-due or lost—all these are named in his diary with pride or anxiety or simply as part of the merchant's day-to-day life. And combined with his work as a merchant were his civic and social activities—his duties as a juror at the Supreme Court; his interest in promoting free emigration and also, strangely, it would seem, in opposing the movement to end

¹ In the winter of 1843 Henry O'Brien, squatter of the Middle District of N.S.W., proved that surplus stock reduced to fat, tallow, and wool turned a serious loss into a measurable gain. 'Within three or four weeks', said the *Sydney Morning Herald* in a leading article, 'Sheep Boiling—the New Discovery', 'the circumstances of the Colony have undergone a change so complete, so delightful, so utterly undreamt of by the most sanguine of people' that it seemed 'like a flattering dream' (quoted by the *Port. Merc.* 26.7.43). See also Billis & Kenyon, *Pastures New*, ch. vi.

transportation; his work in obtaining a floating dock, a new wharf, and a steam tug; in the foundation of the grammar school and the building of Holy Trinity, a second Anglican church; meetings over church affairs with Dr. Nixon, Van Diemen's Land's first bishop; dinner with the Governor to meet Captain Lort Stokes of the survey-ship *Beagle*, to view his beautiful amended chart of Bass Strait; the riding out with some two hundred other citizens to welcome the new Governor, Sir John Eardley-Wilmot, and travelling down-river, as the chosen leader of the northern mercantile community, to exchange a moving farewell at the Heads with Sir John Franklin and his much-maligned wife.

The entries in James's diary are brief but never perfunctory; he felt deeply every experience that came. Like the other settlers of his day, in leaving the Old World he had renounced almost all chance of emotional outlet through music or the arts: he found his relief in the enjoyment of nature and in the creative work of garden, orchard, and field. There was nothing suited to Launceston's climate that he did not grow, no detail of leaf and bud and fruiting that he did not note and record; even on the days when he writes of death or ruin he sets down the hoeing of turnips, pruning of gooseberry bushes, gathering of strawberries, the planting of apple pips or forest trees. And daily, come what may, he records the weather, giving the barometer reading, the details of wind direction and the movements of clouds, perceiving beauty in the skies of every day and not alone in the blazing comet that he likens to the tail-feather of a bird of Paradise. His family, his religion, his garden—with and through these he survived the trials of this unhappy time.

By 1846 the general depression was lifting; farmers might now look for a fair price for their produce, especially the growers of wool, and those who had survived the bad years began to feel that the corner was turned. On 30 June 1845 James as usual summarized his impressions of the recent past and of the future prospects, pronouncing

a favorable opinion of the present aspect of things. . . . Wheat has taken a sudden and somewhat unexpected rise from 2/6 to 5/- a bushel, stock of most kinds cattle perhaps excepted are in demand and sheep decidedly so. Meat is saleable at 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ d per lb and very scarce and the late accounts from England shew an increased de-

mand for staple wool at improved prices: altogether a decided change for the better has taken place and although it is not every one that will feel a direct benefit in the present improved prices all are more or less beneficially affected by them.

In the first weeks of 1846 the diary shows no sign of a return to pessimism; in common with others, James must have looked forward to being able now to straighten out his affairs. It was at this moment of hope that fate struck James down. Fate's instrument was the well-known Launceston merchant, Henry Reed, fervent evangelist and astute accumulator of wealth. Reed, who had recently returned from England, held the Launceston agency for Buckles, the London firm to whom all James's cargoes of wool and other produce were consigned. Buckles were on excellent terms with James and allowed him the large credit of £20,000. It seems clear, however, that they had learnt something of his local liabilities and, wishing to have a representative in Launceston, had armed Reed with their power of attorney—with what instructions to Reed does not, and did not at the time, appear. Reed held the power of attorney in silence for nearly three months, allowing James to go on buying the settlers' goods for shipment overseas and presumably to continue to pay for such goods by the customary method of note of hand. Not until the ships were loaded did Reed reveal the position to James. It was a bolt from the blue. In his diary for 12 March 1846 he records

I have this morning received a communication from Reed with reference to Buckles & Co. which has taken me altogether by surprise and almost paralysed my energies. Time will show what the upshot will be. I must however prepare for the result. I am depressed almost beyond bearing by this most unexpected blow.

Reed and James's bankers, with William acting for James, met to discuss the position. James looked upon this meeting as the beginning of the end; he had 'no other expectation than that of its ending in my winding up'. The statement he laid before them, 'from the depreciated value of property and the fearful list of bad debts', presented 'no favorable appearance'. Although Mr. Hart, of the Bank of Australasia, behaved 'in the most handsome manner and offers everything one could wish or expect from him', and although William exerted himself warmly in

James's favour and was 'doubtless a wholesome check on Reed', the facts had to be faced: deprived of credit, James could no longer carry on business and it was finally determined that he should make no further payments and should call a meeting of creditors at once. 'This fearful step', wrote James, 'is therefore taken—the consequences it is yet impossible to foresee.' Next day, Sunday, before the news was out, James and Charlotte went as usual to church:

April 5th. Took the Sacrament with Charlotte which tended much to quiet my mind and prepare me for the ordeal which I shall have now to go through. Drove Charlotte to Franklin Village in the afternoon to see and acquaint the Boys with the coming event it required much effort but thank God it is done. Henry evidently felt it acutely but bore it with admirable firmness we left them tolerably comfortable.

Next day—'fine fresh morning though cold'—the failure of James Henty & Co. was known. Launceston was aghast at the news, for James, both personally and professionally, was held in the highest respect.

Suffering much from headache, though my spirits are less depressed than I expected. This morning the Town is in a ferment. A general Meeting of Creditors is called for Saturday next. The sympathies of the people are very strong in my favor and individual instances of kindness multiply. I am told that a strong feeling exists against Reed and in my favor: it is gratifying to my feelings to have their sympathies extended towards me, though I have no wish to have them at the expense of Reed until at least he has had the opportunity of justifying his apparently harsh proceedings. Time will shew.

Of the meeting on the 11th James wrote 'This will be an ever memorable day with me'. The creditors were angry, but with Reed, not James; for Reed, on his own statement, had kept silence for three months with the avowed purpose of securing for his client, Buckles, the value of the goods shipped in that period by James, thus depriving the local creditors of a share in that value and the growers of a full reward for their year's work. Reed had a defence and supporters too, who maintained that his behaviour had been perfectly correct. Attacked by one paper, he was defended by the other; 'the community', asserted the *Examiner*, 'have to do with Mr. Reed as a trader, not as a wesleyan', adding, 'not that we insinuate he has compromised

his christian character'. James himself, victim of Reed's code though he was, cannot have thought him dishonorable, for not many years later they were once more on good personal terms.¹ Meantime, James was stunned by Reed's action; but his friends' indignation could not reduce his liabilities and there was nothing for it but to close his doors. His humiliation, and indeed anguish, must be guessed, for he does not set them down.

It was not only in Van Diemen's Land that James's failure caused a stir. In the *Portland Guardian* (28.4.46), a leading article and full report reflected the town's dismay, but the *Guardian's* alarm abated as soon as it was realized that the Portland Bay brothers were in no way involved. In Melbourne the *Port Phillip Gazette* announced with deep regret the embarrassment of 'almost the last of the old firms known in Launceston'. When the news reached Sydney, Richard Windeyer hastened to write to England urging his father-in-law to come out to this side of the world to look after his affairs; for Mr. Camfield, like many other Englishmen unable to find investments at home, had entrusted his capital to the Hentys to invest in Van Diemen's Land. Before the Windeyer letter reached England the news came to Mr. Camfield in another way. Five months after the failure he was seated at breakfast in his London lodgings with his daughter Bessie and two others—two old friends whose income had shrunk to £140 a year—when a letter arrived from his man of business drawing Mr. Camfield's attention to an announcement, published in *The Times*, that the Messrs. Henty of Launceston had failed for £90,000. It was a severe shock and 'spoilt all our breakfasts': for Mr. Camfield, reckoning up figures while his coffee cooled, calculated that if his all were lost in Van Diemen's Land he would have even less to live on than his two impecunious guests. It was five days before Mr. Camfield was relieved by a letter from William with the bare facts. Full reassurance followed from Windeyer, trying to overtake his own precipitate first letter; he had erred in thinking that 'all the Hentys were involved in the crash'; William, Windeyer now learnt, had 'no mercantile connection'

¹ The *Laun. Ex.* in a vigorous leading article, 29.4.46, reproved those who would condemn any of the principals in the painful affair. A favourable account of the enigma that was Reed is given by his wife in her book, *Henry Reed, An Eventful Life, devoted to God and Man*, with a preface by General Booth, of the Salvation Army.

with either Henty Brothers of Portland Bay or Henty & Co. of Launceston, the latter consisting of nobody but James. Mr. Camfield at last felt safe.

For a time, James made no plans. The doors of his office remained shut. He stayed at home, receiving many friends who came to offer their sympathy and to condemn Henry Reed, or he tired himself out with long walks, chiefly to William's house on the George Town Road, Charlotte always on his arm. Severe headaches and rheumatic pains afflicted him, unrecognized as belonging to his state of mind; and for a while his mind had no room even for his garden, though the ritual of weather-notes went on. As usual, he took the boys to Church Square to see the Queen's Birthday Review, but he stayed at home from the birthday formalities at Government Cottage—the Governor's morning levee and the evening ball—'being too much engaged in my own painful affairs'. But soon he roused himself, found pleasure in the bright and varied colours of his chrysanthemums, and returned to his office to face the complicated business of winding up. Obviously, he remained a respected member of the community and both his personal and commercial relations with his bankers were undisturbed. His connexion with Buckles & Co. is beyond understanding—his credit with the firm remained at £20,000 and each seems to have been willing to continue to do business with the other despite the immediate past. Henry Reed, he did not see for a whole year.

With his many properties in Launceston and beyond, his vessels, and also the house in which he lived, put up to auction for the benefit of his creditors, James was now a poor man; all he possessed was a gratuity of £500 voted him by the creditors, with his furniture and personal effects. There was also a small town property that he had settled on Charlotte long before and that the creditors had allowed to remain hers, and there was a small farm she possessed in her own right. This James and she had called Stoke Farm, giving it the same name as the Henty farm on the Swan; it lay beyond Mr. Cox's Clarendon and they drew a little much-needed diversion from driving themselves out there sometimes to inspect the work of the tenants, surveying the country-side from the gig's height and receiving Clarendon hospitality on the way. There was always

a welcome, too, at William's house, and at the cottage in Cameron Street opposite the Bank of Australasia, where his mother now lived and where James seems to have called every day. Strathmore, alas, was no longer a holiday refuge; the years of depression had brought reverses there and Strathmore estate, the mill, and Bryan's Launceston properties were all put up to auction in July: a state of things that Jane Bryan did not bear as meekly as James thought she should. Stephen, like William, bestirred himself on James's behalf, frequently bringing his 'enlivening presence' across the Launceston threshold on his way to do business at Melbourne or Sydney. Charles alone was being difficult; one can only guess that, because of James's liabilities with the Bank of Australasia, Charles's position as manager had become untenable; at any rate he relinquished his connexion with the bank a few months after James failed. Family affection and the trust of friends and clients helped James through this bitter time. The fifteenth anniversary of his marriage followed closely after the collapse; that day, even while sadly contrasting his present worldly prospects with those at the time of his wedding, James felt that he had 'much, very much, to be thankful for'. Unbeaten, he had no other thought but to go into business again.

James and his family had long since outgrown the house beside his business premises in Cimitiere Street and now lived at the corner of Upper St. John and Canning Streets, perhaps in the house where Thomas had lived until his death. At its auction, after spirited bidding, the 'retired and elevated residence of ten rooms, offices and cellars and standing in extensive grounds' was knocked down for £770, subject to the mortgage and interest due the same day and amounting to £1075;¹ this James considered fully £455 more than he had expected and more than it was intrinsically worth. In the meantime he remained as tenant; perhaps it was to bridge this change from ownership

¹ *Laun. Ex.* 5.8.46: '... to sell by public auction at the Royal Exchange Mart, on Tuesday 25th August at 1 o'clock precisely', 'All that beautifully situated Family Residence and Grounds at the upper end of St. John-street, at present occupied by James Henty, Esq. The house contains entrance hall, parlour, and drawingrooms, four bedrooms, servants' rooms, detached kitchen and laundry, store-room and cellar. The grounds are laid out with great taste, and the garden stocked with the choicest fruit trees, the whole surrounded by a substantial fence: frontage on St. John-street, 462 feet; frontage in Canning-street, 222 feet. Title—a grant from the Crown'.

to tenancy that he now set out to visit the 'Sheep Farmer' brothers across the Strait. He and Stephen foregathered at Melbourne—'a bustling place'—on a warm September Sunday. Two days later, shipping their horses, they took the steamer down Port Phillip Bay to Geelong, where, said James, Captain Fyans, the magistrate, 'did the civil and forced us to take wine'. From Geelong they cantered over the treeless plains—the lack of trees irked James—staying at the inns of doubtful comfort that now were to be found on the way, and on the fourth day, riding through open land with lakes and forest they reached the house of the magistrate at the Grange, [Hamilton] Mr. French: Mrs. French and a Mrs. Bartlett, James records, 'had gone for a ride on Horseback by themselves and returned *after dark*'. Next day, riding by way of the lovely Wannon Falls, they soon 'opened the Wannon country, and a beautiful country it is, exceeding anything I have yet seen both in regard to the quality of the soil abundance of Grass and picturesque Scenery'. Calling *en route* at the stations of their friends Sam and George Winter, they covered the last eight miles to Merino Downs at a hand gallop, coming to it just after dark on the fifth day of their journey and 'not sorry to have arrived'. They found Frank well, Mary Ann rather unwell and in bed, and 'Frank's house, homestead and Garden all very comfortable and for a person fond of Country life, affording all the comforts, considering the nature of the Country and its social condition': clearly, James's preference was for the bustle of a town.

Frank had just commenced washing his sheep, which were most of them in excellent condition, one wether which was drowned weighing 72 lbs.¹ Many flocks were however suffering very much from foot rot, owing to the abundance of Grass and moisture.

¹ The sheep was drowned while being washed *before* shearing, the customary English method, followed in Australia for many years after this date and still a matter for dispute between squatters during the last quarter of the century. Wool-scouring after shearing (always the Spanish custom) was never adopted at Merino Downs; after about 1885 Francis Henty followed the custom of selling his wool unwashed ('greasy'). This information was given by Mr. Richard Edwards, a resident of Henty, whom the writer had the good fortune to meet in 1952. In 1881, as a boy of eleven, it was his task to prevent just such an accident happening to old Mr. Francis Henty's sheep during the annual six weeks' shearing at Merino Downs. No truancy law then prevented such periods of absence from school, education not at that time being free and compulsory but given at the National Schools in exchange for a small fee. Young Edwards was eager to be

From Merino Downs they drove to visit John at Sandford seven miles away and found him recovering from a severe fall, the result of a collision between his horse and a tree. At Sandford James was not so well satisfied:

the run appears to me a very good one but I fear things are not managed very well judging from what I saw. He has three nice little Girls and much credit I think is due to their mother for the way in which they are brought up. They can read nicely.

Edward and his wife were not then at Muntham but at the Bay; however, next day James and Stephen

rode over to Muntham, Edward's Head station, where all the buildings, House, Garden, Wool Shed etc., seem very complete and appear to have been erected without much regard to expense. We rode over some portions of this splendid run which certainly is superior to any thing I have anywhere seen. The Cattle are in excellent order but I regret to see scab so prevalent amongst the Sheep, there is evidently too much for one person to manage and for

working out-of-doors among the sheep and men and his parents were glad of the boy's wages, a useful eight shillings a week. Preparations for shearing the 22,000 sheep, says Mr. Edwards, always began on 7 Oct. The sheepwash paddock was two miles from the shearing shed; between these two points were six paddocks, through which the washed sheep were passed, moving one paddock nearer to the shed each day, no sheep being shorn less than six days after washing. Water was led from a dam into a boiler and the heated water piped into a large cement tank; in relays, the sheep were thrown into this, scrubbed with soft soap, and run up into a second tank where a man, placed above and known as 'Jack-in-the-box', directed a stream of cold water directly on to them. The sheep were then drained in a race holding from 100 to 150 and turned out into a straw-covered paddock, the first of the six, to begin drying on their way to the shearing shed. Young Edwards's task was to stand by the hot-water tank as the sheep swam up it, and with a crutch hold up any animal showing exhaustion and so prevent it from drowning; for this he was known as 'the Doctor'.

As well as his 8s. wage Edwards received weekly rations: $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. tea, 10 lb. meat, 10 lb. flour, 2 lb. sugar, vegetables from the kitchen garden, but no butter or milk. Extras, such as jam, were bought from a common fund. When Edwards left school at fourteen he took full-time work at Merino Downs, working under Rooking, the big bullock-driver. The man in charge of the sheep was called Widdicombe; the stable-boss was McPhee, whose father had been shepherd on Merino Downs (and perhaps in fact the *McVea* who had come with Edward from Launceston in 1834?) Foster was overseer of the thistle-cutters. Mr. Edwards, for many years past the owner of a farm and flock, has warm memories of Rooking and his wife, once nurse to the Henty children and then cook for the family, the manager, the overseer and the men, as well as for those young gentlemen sent to Merino Downs to learn how to run a sheep station—'colonial experiencers', Mr. Edwards calls them, using in 1952 the term in vogue a century before.

Edward's own sake it would be better was his concern reduced one half at the least. The run comprises over 70,000 acres the greater portion of which is well watered. . . . After dinner we returned to Frank's. We took the Hounds with us and at night long after dark we crossed the track of a Native Dog which gave us a good gallop over the Grass for nearly an hour, without fear of Trees, holes or other impediments.

Oct. 2. We started on the road to the Bay, calling at Emu Creek [Digby] where there is a little village and a good Inn kept by R^d Lewis. We pushed on to Edgar's the first inn where we slept.¹

From here it was only sixteen miles to the Bay. Early next morning they started off in a white frost and were at Stephen's house in time for breakfast at nine. The house was no longer the temporary quarters on Section 3, but a roomy dwelling, Jane's and Stephen's final Portland home. Called Richmond House, it was of brick and wood, with stone stables and imposing stone store; in altered form and with many additions it is still there, as the Richmond Hotel. On that frosty morning in 1846 it must have looked to James just as it is described in the memoirs of 'Rolf Boldrewood', author of the famous Australian classic, *Robbery Under Arms*. 'Boldrewood'—pen-name of Thomas Alexander Browne, at that time a young squatter living not far from Port Fairy—was a welcome guest in many of the Western District houses: 'No more delightful country home', he wrote of Richmond House,

ever existed than the wide-verandahed spacious bungalow, from the windows of which the view was unbroken of the Bay. A well-trimmed garden-hedge hid the intervening street and slope to the beach without obstructing the view. There, if anywhere, was to be found true earthly happiness, if such can ever be predicated of this lower world and its inhabitants. A promising family, full of health, spirits and intelligence, parents and children alike over-flowing with kindness, hospitality unostentatiously extended both to friends and acquaintances, residents and strangers; a noble property gradually and surely increasing in value; family affection extended in its purest form.

A large house-party was assembled when Stephen and James arrived—Edward and his wife Annie, from Muntham; Mrs.

¹ The Bush Tavern at the Fitzroy crossing, where Heywood now is (*Learmonth*, p. 218).

Edward's mother, English Mrs. Gallie, and her unmarried daughter, homeless wanderers making a stay of months;¹ Mrs. Gallie's son David and Fanny, his wife, besides Stephen's own wife and their children, now five. It is easy to imagine the welcome—and the breakfast—the travellers received and the keen pleasure the domestic scene gave to the home-loving James.

There was much at Portland to see; he found the town much altered since my last visit, some few of the Buildings chiefly Stephen's are very good, but there are less of small Brick Houses than I expected to see; there is a good Court House and Gaol also a long Jetty, but I fear this is not very substantial. . . . I should say that there is a great want of land for building purposes available to the public—if the Government were to offer more for sale it would be eagerly purchased and built upon.²

James had to be shown the vessel that Stephen was building at the Convincing Ground, a spot seven miles along the beach; also 'the Melting Establishment', the Hentys' own boiling-down works, where the sheep of the neighbourhood were turned into exportable tallow and thus into a modicum of money for their impoverished owners; these works he found 'much more extensive and expensive' than he had expected. There was church to attend on Sunday (no longer held in the Henty wool-store),³

¹ From extracts in Mrs. Edward Henty's diary copied from a notebook of Miss Gallie's, Mrs. Gallie, and her daughter had arrived in Melbourne in Dec. 1842, and divided their time between Launceston and Sydney until July 1845, when 'Mama and I left Sydney for Portland to stay with Annie at Muntham. . . . March 1846 all went to Portland to stay with Mrs. S. G. Henty where Mama and I remained till November then returned to Muntham. Nov. 1856 Mama and I left Muntham to live at Burswood'—that is, with Edward and his wife in their new stone house, Burswood, built across the creek south of the town (Union Bank, Portland, letter-book, *Historical Studies, Australia and New Zealand*, No. 5).

² 'Thanks to the perseverance of the Chief Constable', Thomas Finn, a census of inhabitants and dwellings had been taken in the previous April (*Laun. Ex.* 15.4.46, from *Port. Gaz.*). In the Portland that James saw, therefore, there were probably about 800 people—398 men, 250 women, and 148 children under seven; with 87 wooden houses and 20 stone or brick. Geelong at this time had nearly 1,400 inhabitants and was soon to outstrip Portland as a seaport and mart. Today Geelong is a spreading industrial town of 46,000, while Portland, though with busy wharves and modern freezing works, remains a shapely and charming little city of 4,000 souls.

³ The wool-store was not needed for this purpose after June 1843, when the first school-house was completed and was used for Sunday worship for the next twelve years. Known from the first as St. Stephen's, it was replaced by the present church of that name on 11.5.56; the first building remains as part of the present church

and on Monday 7 October he sailed for Launceston via Circular Head. On the 10th he

arrived at George Town this morning at 7 a.m. just in time to save the wind. Anchored at the White Buoy until 9 when a light air came up and carried us to Town at 4 p.m. when I thank God I found all well, having been absent 22 days.

When James failed, both Stephen and William had been certain that their brother would leave at once for England to make arrangements for a fresh start. James himself at first had no such intention; curiously enough, it was the advice of Henry Buckle that more than a year later decided him to go. He was very reluctant to leave Launceston, for it meant interrupting the children's schooling; nor did he know how the heavy expense was to be met. It was met with the help of Stephen, whose Portland business, now flourishing, would benefit from James's presence in London for a time; and the question of where to live on arrival with wife and seven children seems to have been solved by writing to Charlotte's sister, Miss Elizabeth Carter of Worthing, to tell her of the plan.

The ship was chosen, the barque *Winchester*, Captain Milligan, 393 tons. With the end of 1847 the horrid period of farewells approached; for though James was to return to the Australian Colonies he did not intend to live in Launceston again. No doubt the public breakfast in his honour, attended by fifty of Launceston's leading tradesmen, and the open letter of appreciation signed by the Rev. Dr. Browne of St. John's on behalf of a number of prominent citizens, were a matter of satisfaction to a man whose self-esteem had been so sorely hurt.¹ The parting that gave him nothing but sorrow was with his mother, now seventy-two years old. Three days before sailing, he

had the great gratification of receiving the Sacrament of our Lord Saviour with my dear Mother and Charlotte at my House, administered by Dr. Browne in a very pleasing manner. This tended much with me as I feel assured it has with her to render our parting more consolatory—though we may never meet again on earth. . . .

On the evening of 10 January 1848 James and his wife and

hall (*Learmonth*, p. 153). The new church contains a number of memorials to members of the Henty family.

¹ *Laun. Ex.* 5.1.48 and 12.1.48.

family embarked in the *Winchester*; 'William came off with us exhibiting his brotherly kindness to the last'.

Sailing via the Cape of Good Hope and St. Helena—never again would James or Charlotte consent to face the route by the Horn—they arrived off the coast of England on Tuesday, 30 May. The 31st was a

Cloudy day, completely calm, water of a milky appearance. Fine western wind arose at 11 a.m. Isle of W. in sight, sound of gunfire (Portsmouth probably). At 12 noon we were boarded by a Deal Pilot boat in which we all embarked and landed safely at Shoreham but very wet.

In Sussex, as elsewhere in England, the day of the coach was over; at Shoreham the Hentys not only had their first sight of a railway but, all slightly apprehensive, proceeded by it 'to Worthing where we arrived at 9 p.m. or less than 10 minutes after we got into the Railway Carriage, finishing our voyage after a passage of 140 days'.

James's mother—until recently, as William assured him, 'with spirits equal to her youngest days'—had died while they were at sea.

DEEDS OF POSSESSION

WHEN James sailed for England early in 1848 it was with the knowledge that the family land problem was settled at last.¹ Towards the end of 1844 William, acting for all the brothers, had raised the matter yet again, sending LaTrobe a fresh proposal for submission to Gipps. In forwarding this proposal to Sydney in December LaTrobe reminded the Colonial Secretary that there had been no reply to LaTrobe's despatch of October 1843, and pointed out that 'in justice to Mr. Henty's family and for the satisfaction of the Government the matter should be finally adjusted if possible'. Gipps rejected William's proposal and the Hentys made no further move for some months. At the end of 1845 they accepted the terms they had refused in 1843, capitulating, presumably because they felt there was no hope of better terms and possibly because the improved times meant that they could now more easily pay the demanded price. Their acceptance was at once sent on to Sydney by LaTrobe: this time it was quickly answered (February 1846) from Sydney, where Gipps, his term of office over, was winding up affairs;² he gave his last ruling on the Henty case and left the final adjustment to LaTrobe. The adjustment took yet another year: LaTrobe was conscientious, the Hentys, scattered on both sides of Bass Strait, had to discuss the memorandum he drew up. Finally, in May 1847, LaTrobe informed the Colonial Secretary that the matter had recently been

re-opened by Mr. Stephen George Henty, who has presented himself as the legal representative of his family under power of attorney from James Henty, Charles Shum Henty, and William Henty, of Launceston, Executors of the last will of Thomas Henty, the father, with whom the claim to compensation from Her Majesty's Government originated. The power of attorney has been handed into my office. By a letter, a copy of which I enclose, Mr. Stephen George

¹ The final official papers in the Henty case are in the *Melb. Arch.*

² Gipps left Sydney in July 1846. He lived only three months after arriving in England, another Australian governor whose death was probably hastened by devotion to duty and the burden of overwork.

Henty formally accepts in the name of his family the arrangement which I have proposed.

By this arrangement the Hentys were to be allowed to take 11 town acres at £100 per acre and 145 country acres at £2 an acre, making the amount due by them £1,390. As to compensation, LaTrobe simply announced that he had increased the amount to £348—treble the sum allowed by Gipps. Unlike Gipps, remote in Sydney, LaTrobe had seen the Hentys, not merely in his office as suppliants or protesters, but on their home-ground at the Bay or inland, at work. Personally acquainted with the locality and with the character of the Hentys' improvements, he felt it was 'just and reasonable' to allow for the loss of these improvements as well as for the damage done by Government to their Portland buildings; thus, he said, there would be a total set-off of £348 against the sum of £1,390 that the Hentys would have to pay into the Treasury.

There is a pleasant air of independence in this despatch of LaTrobe's. Perhaps it was merely due to the fact that his new senior, Sir Charles Fitzroy, was a less formidable man than his predecessor; but it may have been a small shadow of the coming event—for Port Phillip, LaTrobe's sphere of administration, was at last about to become the Colony of Victoria, independent of any governor of the Colony of New South Wales. But though separation, long clamoured for, was coming, the power of final decision was still not LaTrobe's: he concluded his despatch by asking that the subject should be again brought under the Government's notice for final approval. That approval was promptly given by Sir Charles Fitzroy and the battle of years was over: when at last the slow formalities were finished in February 1849, three of the brothers—Edward, William, and Stephen George—held the titles to every allotment of Section 4.¹

But the Hentys' return to their disputed Portland allotment had not to be delayed so long. It was in February 1846 that Gipps acknowledged their acceptance of his terms; on 27 March the *Guardian* said there was 'good ground for believing, that the long-pending claims of the Messrs. Henty are so far settled that they have obtained full and legal possession of the splendid block from which they were . . . some time ago ejected.

¹ Records in the Lands Department, Melbourne.

That block of land, long lying idle in dispute, has long been an eyesore to the inhabitants, and a bar to the spread of the town . . .'. Shortly afterwards Stephen vacated his house on Section 3, letting it to the Union Bank; by June at latest, the month the bank took over those premises, he must have been installed in the new house to which, in October, and surely with pride and pleasure, he brought James at the end of their long ride.¹

Had the Hentys gained anything from their thirteen years of dogged and costly persistence? The answer must be, No, since instead of receiving money they were required to pay it out. On the other hand, had they lost as badly as they themselves judged? Again the answer seems to be No: for Stephen, in Portland, was now a prosperous merchant, and Edward and Frank, entitled by licence to graze over large areas of the Wanon country, became very wealthy men; what they had to pay the Crown in exchange for possession of the small pieces of land containing their houses and other buildings, both inland and at Portland Bay, was insignificant compared with the capital the brothers later amassed. But at the time that the Crown's charges were made the Hentys were not yet wealthy; when they left England they had counted on much earlier returns from colonial settlement and much of their original capital had

¹ The age of Portland's historic Richmond Hotel is a matter of strong local interest. Known to have been Stephen Henty's 'Richmond House', a successor to his original dwelling, it is stated by Learmonth, p. 56, to have been in existence and occupied by Stephen as a new residence in Feb. 1842. Learmonth quotes as evidence references by Captain Lort Stokes, who in that month 'had the pleasure of meeting' Stephen, spoke of Stephen's 'new house' and used it as a trigonometrical point in the work of fixing the position of the boundary of S.A. and N.S.W. But the new house in question was undoubtedly the building now known as 77 Bentinck Street and later let to the Union Bank. The time of Lort Stokes's visit was close to the very last day by which the Hentys had to leave their old premises on Section 4: it is clearly impossible that at that same date Stephen should have built and be living in a new house also on that forbidden ground.

The old bluestone store still standing behind the Richmond Hotel is pointed out to tourists as the one where services were held in the days before Portland had a church: if indeed it is that store, it must have been built not later than 1839, when government intervention at the Bay and the resulting uncertainty must have halted the erection of any such large buildings by the Hentys. Actually, its age is unknown; but it seems more probable that it was built not earlier than the Richmond Hotel itself, that is, during 1846.

Richmond House, with lots 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 of Section 4, facing Bentinck, Julia, and Richmond Streets, passed out of Henty hands on 20.1.1909 when it was sold after Mrs. Stephen Henty's death (*Henty Family Papers*).

vanished during the years of delay. Those years had culminated in the catastrophe of the depression; when the argument ended with the receipt of Stanley's despatch late in 1842 the depression was barely over and the Hentys were not yet out of the wood. The terms laid down by the Colonial Government filled them with a sense of hardship and injustice so strong that today it is as much a part of the family story as is that other and irrefutable tradition that the Hentys were the first to land merino sheep in Victoria, the State-to-be. A detached view, however, suggests that the Hentys were not unjustly treated, but were simply unlucky. It was their misfortune to have arrived in Van Diemen's Land a few months after the ending of free grants, and in southern New South Wales a few years before the right of pre-emption that, granted as a special favour to the Hentys and much begrudged, was made available to all. Emigrating from England with ambitious land-owning plans based on official promises, they found themselves forced eventually to become squatters at a time when squatters had no legal rights. In each rejection of a Henty prayer, the Government had the law on its side; but the Hentys, though law-abiding citizens and imbued with a strong sense of community service, were believers in the special case, their own. With this belief, they clung to the temporizing words of Lord Aberdeen, hoping for a more liberal interpretation of them than by 1843 any colonial government could have been indiscreet enough to give. Gipps resented having to concede them anything; to him they were just a particularly irritating group of that squatting community whose growing importunities he resisted until towards the end of his administration his common sense forced him to moderate his views.

It was wool that saved the Hentys—wool, and their early occupation of the Wannon country, of all Australia Felix the most productive part. It was the quality of this land that enabled them to weather the two main difficulties of those early years—lack of labour and lack of markets for anything but wool. In Muntham and Merino Downs, consisting between them of a hundred square miles of glorious grazing country, the Hentys' long-ago dreams of life as colonial pastoralists were surely fulfilled.

EPILOGUE

1851-1882



WHAT became of the Hentys? And, while on their road to success and after reaching it, did they give as well as get?

As to the first question, except for William they remained in the colonies until their death and identified themselves with the local life; their children grew up in Australia and their descendants to the fourth generation, under a number of different surnames and following many occupations, are to be found in many parts of the Commonwealth today.

As to the second question, like all other settlers the Henty brothers were bent in the first place on establishing themselves, and they fought for their own rights as they saw them; but, while pursuing their personal goal, they were undoubted assets to the colony, for their goal was the production of essential goods—wool and thoroughbred stock, farm produce and whale-oil—and the trading of essential commodities. In addition, they made another important if less tangible contribution through their own attitude to life. No family is perfect, or its members even equally good, and the Hentys in this respect were no different from others. But most of them possessed qualities welcome anywhere and helpful in any group—sincerity, kindness, generosity of behaviour, bodily vigour and, not least beneficial, the geniality that warms the mood of less happily constituted or more timorous men. Of the seven brothers, five—James, Charles, Stephen, William, and Edward—gave public service in its conventional meaning, becoming for varying periods members of the legislatures of Victoria and Tasmania, while that sort of social service that comes from the pleasant habit of being neighbourly seems to have been given by them all.

In 1884, when all the brothers were dead but Francis, an estimate of their value was written by one who knew them well, the same 'Rolf Boldrewood' who had described Stephen's

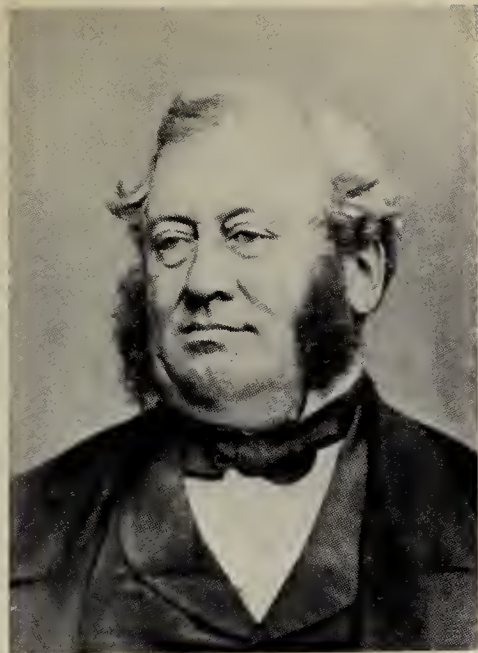
Portland house. In the 40's and 50's he lived near Port Fairy; from there, as he wrote in his *Melbourne Memories*,

in the distance, lying north west, were the cliffs and noble bay of Portland, not a very grand town but noteworthy as the *point d'appui* whence those representative Englishmen and distinguished colonists, the Hentys, commenced the Anglo-Saxon conquest of Australia Felix.

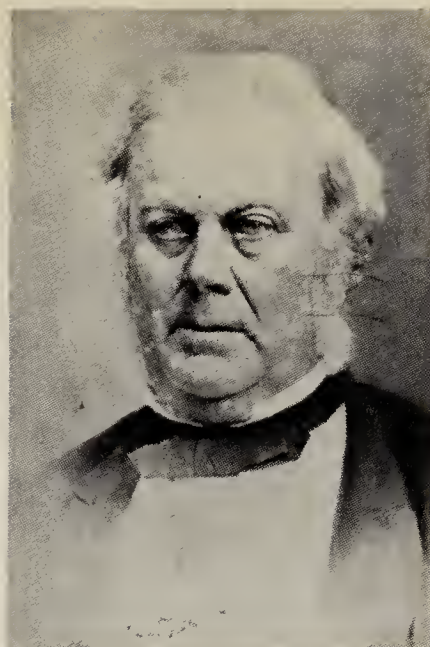
I had the pleasure of knowing these gentlemen; and the longer I live the stronger becomes my conviction that the genuine Englishman, compacted as he is of diverse races, holding the strong points of each, is the best 'all-round' man the earth affords. And the Hentys, as a family, have demonstrated my proposition perhaps more completely than any other who ever landed on our shores. For consider what manner of colonisers they were! Explorers, sailors, whalers, farmers, squatters, merchants, politicians . . . in all these different avocations the brothers were of proved excellence. Indeed, each displayed in his own personality an aptitude for the whole range of accomplishments.

Stalwart and steadfast were they in body and mind, well-fitted to contend with the rude forces of nature and still ruder individuals, among whom their lot was chiefly cast in those days. But withal genial, hilarious, and in their moments of relaxation prone to indulge in the full swing of those high animal spirits which, for the most part, accompany a robust bodily and mental organization.

Browne, to give Boldrewood his real name, speaks of Edward of Muntham and Francis of Merino Downs but, although he must have known him, he does not mention John. John's fate was not a happy one. With as good a start as his brothers in the first years of Australia Felix, John alone proved without the tenacity of purpose, the strength of character, that even in those days of opportunity was needed if a man were to make good. In the face of so much family forcefulness it must have been bitter to be, like John, less and less of a success. Dropped from the family concern in 1842, on conditions that he said satisfied him, his mismanagement of his own station had made James uneasy in 1846. Selling out next year, he took up farming near Warnambool; no more successful there, he moved back to the neighbourhood of Portland Bay. Thence, alone, he returned to the colony of his boyhood, Western Australia, where he is said to have died in 1868, when he was no more than fifty-five. Eliza, deserted by her husband, her only son dead, lived her last years in Melbourne, befriended by John's brothers and



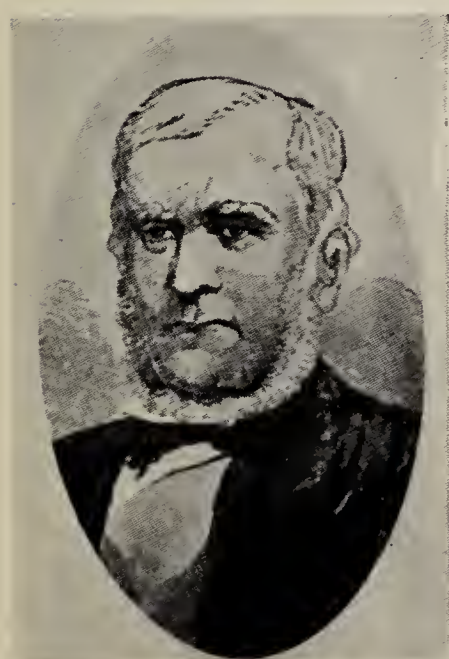
EDWARD HENTY, GRAZIER
Victoria's First Permanent Settler



FRANCIS HENTY, GRAZIER



STEPHEN HENTY, MERCHANT



JOHN HENTY, GRAZIER
AND FARMER



WILLIAM HENTY, SOLICITOR
AND COLONIAL SECRETARY,
TASMANIA, 1857-1862



MRS. JAMES HENTY
(Charlotte Carter)



MRS. STEPHEN HENTY
(Jane Pace)



MRS. EDWARD HENTY
(Anna Maria Gallie)

their wives. During those years certain small great-nieces, growing up in a happier home, were taken sometimes on duty-visits to Eliza and her daughters; considered too young for confidences, the children knew without being told that this family cupboard hid something unhappy, that here was something gone wrong.

To be owner of Muntham, one feels, fulfilled all Edward's aims. There, he was not only a squatter—soon to become a label that prosperity made more than acceptable—but a squire as well. Fresh-faced and good-looking, 'with sleeves tucked up and sweating brow', as the *Guardian* described him, he was a master who could show each man his particular task and also, a happy host, succeed in creating an easy-going edition of the social life he had seen among the Sussex estate-owners as a boy. Muntham was not only the home of pure horse-flesh, cattle, and sheep; it was open house, where lively people gathered to dance and play cricket, to race and to hunt. Cuthbert Fetherstonhaugh, an Irishman who in his youth lived at Muntham while working there as a 'Colonial experienter'—the 'jackeroo' of today—has testified to the unique quality of the property as he knew and loved it when Edward had been its master for ten or fifteen years. Never, he says, during half a century's travels through Australia, from Melbourne to the Gulf of Carpentaria, over most of Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland, had he come across a property of equal size to compare in quality with the rolling downs of Old Muntham Estate. In 1846 James had noted that at Muntham everything was done regardless of expense; he had judged Edward unwise, just as he had found John negligent, and, townsman though he was, in both cases his shrewd eye had seen aright. In the fifties and sixties Muntham was still conducted on a lavish scale: the herds of roan Durhams, the magnificent Suffolk Punches, the stable-full of glorious saddle-horses and handsome carriage-horses, perfectly matched; the 5 acres of gardens, with their natural springs and rich chocolate soil; the comfortable house, set against the steep downs, and where the high-spirited 'Colonial experienters' lived in more than comfort, cared for by the indoor staff always kept there even though by that time Edward and his wife spent less time at Muntham than at Melbourne or the Bay: managers, overseers, stockmen, shepherds, hutkeepers, gardeners and

grooms and their families; the cook, man, and housemaid in the house itself—the cost must have been enormous, nor was it offset by the estate's returns. Fetherstonhaugh, who rejoices to recall the details of this establishment, also tells regretfully of the flaw in the pastoral jewel, and that was its owner's policy as regards his sheep. In the methods he pursued with the offspring of Thomas Henty's once-famous flock, Edward was fatally conservative, obstinate in sticking to his own opinion, almost eccentric in that he refused through the years to cull a single sheep. Each shearing produced less and less of the beautiful crimped wool; each year the flocks deteriorated, the increase actually being balanced by disease and death: when they came to be sold after Edward's death in 1878, not a ram or a ewe was found fit to breed from. Muntham must have been carried on the broad backs of his cattle, needing less skill.

In 1850 Edward and Frank began planning for themselves two of Portland's earliest stone houses, Frank's two-story Claremont in Julia Street and Edward's Burrswood outside the town, on a slope with a view of houses, beach and jetty, and the coast beyond. At Muntham the kindly Edward had given house-room to his wife's mother, Mrs. Gallie, and his sister-in-law Fanny, and in November 1856, when Edward and his wife left Muntham to live in Portland, the Gallies went with them, making Burrswood their home. That was the year that Edward was elected to the Legislative Assembly to represent Normanby, the district that included his own Portland Bay; re-elected in 1859, he was defeated in 1861 and did not stand again. Later (? 1873), he built a large residence in St. Kilda Road, Melbourne, calling it Offington after the beautiful estate near Tarring, once the property of the Earls de la Warr. It is at Offington that he is remembered by a great-niece with clear recollections of those far-off days, when Uncle Edward had become enormously stout and when to youthful minds the most impressive thing about him, next to his jovial friendliness, was his inability to pick up anything that he dropped; and it was at Offington that he died on 14 August 1878.

As Edward aged, his thoughts, it is known, often went back to the days of his youthful agility and his labours as blacksmith, ploughman, carpenter and general farm-hand. From the first—as early as in his letter to Major Mitchell in 1836—he had

claimed too great credit for the Portland Bay enterprise as an influence on the first settlement on Port Phillip Bay, wrongly asserting that the Hentys' activities had been the sole cause of the Batman and Fawkner movement from across Bass Strait; he was claiming it even after thirty years, when he and Fawkner contended in a newspaper argument—acrimonious on Fawkner's part, lofty on Edward's—for first place in the annals of the State. It was his pleasure to entertain the school-children of Portland in the grounds of Burrswood, giving them buns and ginger-pop and bidding them look upon the first settler, the founder of their town. Perhaps because he had no son or daughter, no grandchildren to carry his mind away from himself and into the future, he enlarged a little his own part in the Portland Bay achievement of the past, growing indeed somewhat unwilling to share with Francis and Stephen, and John too, as they truly deserved, the laurels publicly awarded to him as Victoria's Pioneer.

Francis took no part in parliamentary life, devoting himself successfully to the interests of Merino Downs for nearly forty years. He and Mary Ann had three daughters and one son. As the family grew, so did the house, and the English oak from Fawkner's Launceston nursery that was planted beside it in 1843: the oak, indeed, grew so prodigiously in the Wannon valley soil that from time to time house had to be altered to fit tree. Out of doors was a world of sheep and cattle, bullock-wagons, wool-bales and the saddle, a world where cockatoos screamed and chattered and white man competed for a little longer with the resentful native for the still-plentiful kangaroo. But indoors it was essentially England: Rockingham china and fluted tea-caddy were in daily use, papier-maché work-box rested on mahogany and walnut beside volumes describing travels in Italy and Greece. Much of the Rockingham service has survived; there is still tea in the caddy and some unfinished bead-embroidery in the work-box with the secret drawer—the drawer where Mary Ann's treasured recipe for orange bitters was found after her death. There were, of course, servants to polish the mahogany, to cook the generous joints, to carry the giant meat-platter from the detached kitchen—down four steps, across the courtyard by the path of terra-cotta tiles set diamond-wise and up four steps again into the house proper. But Mary

Ann was no idle mistress; indeed, as a housewife, she became something of a martinet. A little apron over her dress, skirts lifted to clear her small shoes, she would step along the veranda and passages, looking into each room in turn, eyes alert for the short-comings of her maids. For the three little daughters, Louisa, Caroline and Alice, white socks were ordained; there had to be twenty-one pairs in the weekly wash-tub or the nursery was under a cloud. But the nursery was a happy place. To the children, their nurse, Jane, was as dependable, as much a part of their lives, as the Downs that rose to view beyond the creek, serene day in, day out, through every storm. In time Jane married. Her husband was one of two deserters from a coastal wreck, a ship called the *Victory*; the two men had sought work from Francis, hiding their identity under their mothers' names. In reality Andrew and Piercy, as Foster and Rooking they were taken on, Foster at Muntham and Rooking as bullock-driver at Merino Downs, where his mate later rejoined him; both stayed for life. When after some years Jane turned into Mrs. Rooking the children's world was little shaken, for she merely moved across the creek to her husband's selection on the slope beyond; the little plantation is still there, and remembered as Rooking's, but their cottage is gone. Later, her own family launched, Jane was back at Merino Downs as cook; still dependable, and now solid as the sack of potatoes her shape resembled, she lived there, widely known as 'a character', until pensioned by Francis in her old age.

Francis sent Lawrence, his son, to Melbourne's first public school, the Church of England Grammar School, and later to Cambridge, but the daughters were taught at home: Mary Ann had been so unhappy at Van Diemen's Land's fashionable boarding-school, Ellenthorpe Hall, that she refused to risk the experience for her girls. In those days suitable governesses were hard to lure into the distant wilds and harder still to keep content when there; in the end it was arranged that the woman teacher from the 'National school' not far off should ride over to Merino Downs every second Saturday and compress a fortnight's instruction into that one day. In between, Louisa, Caroline and Alice worked through a programme prescribed for two weeks ahead and the inevitable urging and clarifying fell to Francis and Mary Ann.

Merino Downs, even more than Muntham, was to become famous for its hospitality; but long before the days of ease and organized household LaTrobe, on tour and entertained overnight by the Francis Hentys, was given what he was to record in his journal of later years as an 'excellent reception and excellent wine': in her earliest married life Mary Ann evidently knew how to be a good hostess even if her roof was then so limited that she had to accommodate distinguished visitors like Sir John and Lady Franklin in a detached sod hut. Ten years later it had become a charming and comfortable home: in the words of Fetherstonehaugh,

kinder or more considerate host and hostess than Mr. and Mrs. Frank Henty were not to be met with in those dear old days, when there was no ceremony, and but little conventionality, and when a visitor could always be sure of a hearty welcome, and the only difficulty was to get away.

Francis and his wife settled in Melbourne in 1876, building a house, Field Place, in the suburb of Kew. From here he maintained a close connexion with his station by frequent visits and through detailed letters to his manager, Charles Lethbridge, written in a clear, small, and regular hand. Lawrence, his son, died young; his wife, Mary Ann, for years a victim to acute headaches, died 27 November 1881. Francis himself lived until 1889, extremely well-off, generous to the less fortunate among his kin, a lover of the sport of racing, interested to the last in Merino Downs and especially in the horses he bred there for the Indian market—a realization of one of old Thomas Henty's earliest dreams. He died in his seventy-fourth year; only his brother James and sister Jane Bryan lived to a greater age.

In the rich Wannon country the large landowner is practically no more, or survives only by the system of share-farms. The hundred square miles originally comprised in Muntham and Merino Downs have long been divided into small holdings comfortably supporting many owners; a few of these are the descendants of Francis and Mary Ann and the core of the original Merino Downs remains in family hands. The old rambling homestead, still in existence only a few years ago, is gone, and the oak too; white ants destroyed the one, and opossums the other. But below the old garden, facing across

the creek to the bare shoulders of the low hills, a small monument stands with an inscription telling that

Here
on 3rd August 1837
Francis Henty
set up the first camp
on his station
Merino Downs

With his wife Matilda and their daughter Mary, William returned to England in 1862. For some years before then he had been a member of Tasmania's Upper House, and Colonial Secretary for five and a half years. His days were full and interesting; but Matilda had become ailing and 'difficult' and it may have been a hope of restoring her health that decided him to resign and renew life in the Old Country. One feels, however, that he had never quite reconciled himself to conditions in the New.

William retained his love of setting things down on paper. While still in Launceston and after settling again at Brighton, he published little articles on such subjects as cottage husbandry, the education of children, the art of conversation, all full of a certain grace of expression as well as common sense. But if a family story be true the last was an art which it was not easy to practice in his company. It is said that while dressing for dinner before his high mirror he would make notes of topics for discussion at the coming meal. At table, when he considered one subject was exhausted he would consult his notes and say, 'Now, next . . .' and nobody else had the temerity to introduce a topic not on William's list—certainly not the young clergyman, Edgar Summers, suitor for the hand of Mary, William's charming daughter.

William's respect for the written word fortunately led him to preserve the various family papers that came into his possession from time to time. Passing into the hands of Mary, by then Mrs. Summers, they continued to survive and later, in unopened bundles, remained in the care of Mary's son and daughter until sent recently by air to Australia for use in this book. In James's letters from the *Caroline* and from the settlement on the Swan, William and his descendants have saved one of the few chrono-



49. CROQUET AT MERINO DOWNS, 1870

The three daughters of Francis and Mary Ann Henty, with a cousin. The downs in the distance and black cockatoos in flight



50. A RED GUM AT MERINO DOWNS, 1870

still standing and known locally as the Henty tree. Francis Henty is behind the shafts of the waggonette



51. PORTLAND BAY AND HENTY SHIPS IN THE SIXTIES

The steamer is the *Ladybird*, and the house visible close to her bowsprit is probably Richmond House

Now in the possession of the Public Library, Victoria

logical personal accounts that exist of early Australian colonial days. These letters are now in the Western Australian Archives.

Matilda Henty died in Brighton in May 1879, and her husband did not long survive her. It was nearly twenty years since any of the brothers had seen William but letters had kept them in close touch, and James's diary records his distress at the news that the gentle William was mortally ill and suffering severe pain. 'Alas! poor William', wrote James, when he learnt of his death, adding as an epitaph, 'He was a kind brother'.

When William returned to England, Charles alone was left in Tasmania, and he lived only two more years, dying at George Town in 1864. But in the next century Launceston was again to know Hentys as residents, grandsons of James, with all their several forebears' interest in the civic and commercial activities of the town and in the wider Australian political scene.

As Portland's leading merchant during its early years, shipper of the district's wool, and owner of many vessels, both sail and steam, Stephen was more closely identified than any of the others with Portland itself—more even than Edward, whose name is always linked with the town and is so much more widely known. After the first years Edward's career was concerned more with Muntham, until he became an absentee landlord, while the best part of Stephen's life was lived at Portland and given to its growth. In 1839, when Surveyor Tyers refers in his report to 'Mr. Henty'—to Mr. Henty's road, his whalemen, his opinion of the country—he is speaking of Stephen; when later the local newspapers mention a Mr. Henty active in matters concerning church- and school-building, road-making, the founding of the literary and scientific society, it is Stephen that they mean; later still, the office of his store in Julia Street was Portland's first Savings Bank and his clerk its first cashier. Not self-assertive, but full of initiative, a trustworthy and effective man of business, the boldest of the brothers in exploring, he seems also to have been the most successful in dealing with other men; more balanced than Edward, stronger than William, of wider interests than Francis, more flexible than James. With his success in what would now be called 'human relations', Jane, his wife, perhaps had something to do. Of all the Henty wives it is Mrs. Stephen Henty whose personality has survived most

clearly from the past. The bride of twenty, Jane Pace, carried ashore through the surf of Portland Bay in 1836, grew into a remarkable woman, noted for her wide sympathies, her good temper and selfless character, and a sense of enjoyment undiminished by the trials and anxieties of her long life. At the age of forty she was the mother of ten children—six daughters and four sons; despite these family cares she was the warm-hearted hostess and ready befriender, the indefatigable supporter of church and charitable affairs. But, as everyone knows, good deeds do not of themselves inspire love, and of Stephen's wife it is a tradition of not mere admiration but love that remains. As the first woman to make a permanent home in the State of Victoria she became an almost historic personage, and a visit to Mrs. Stephen Henty was part of the programme of each Victorian governor in turn, following the custom begun in the earliest days by Superintendent LaTrobe. Schooled in youth to move and sit with head erect, even in old age she spurned an 'easy' chair; but old age brought no rigidity to her outlook and neither face nor spirit grew stern.

As a member of Victoria's legislature from 1856–70 Stephen had to spend much of his time away from Portland, where he had given such long service 'as a Magistrate, a Merchant, a Citizen and a Friend'—words used in a public tribute paid to him in 1859. He built a house in the Melbourne suburb of Kew, calling it after the village of Findon, site of the big sheep and cattle fair where Thomas and his sons had bought and sold in the old days. Except James, he was the only one of the brothers to pay a visit to England; two young daughters were there at the time, and his eldest son Richmond, and they all returned to Australia together in the *Frances Henty*, a vessel of Stephen's own. Findon was their home until Stephen became an invalid and, his memory failing, a move was made back to the Western District, where he died in the neighbourhood of Hamilton in 1872 aged only sixty-one.

James brought his family back to Australia in 1851, bringing also Eliza Camfield—Henry's beloved Bessie—now alone in the world and on her way to join her sisters in Sydney. James landed in Melbourne from the barque *Persia* with more regret than he had ever before felt in leaving a ship: there had been no quarrel with the captain and he had enough regard for the

doctor to present him with the twenty-five volumes of the Waverley Novels. In the Melbourne streets old friends greeted him, and old servants from Van Diemen's Land sought him out in his lodgings to shake him by the hand. Stephen came up from Portland and together he and James dined with Mr. La Trobe. There were other pleasant dinings-out in company with Charlotte—with Mr. and Mrs. MacArthur of the Bank of Australasia and Bishop and Mrs. Perry in their uncompleted house a mile out of town. There were brief visits alone to Launceston to see William and Charles; John, Francis, and Edward, busy in the Western District, were not easily accessible but Jane Bryan and her husband drove up to town from their station at Mt. Coterell on the Werribee River only twenty-five miles away. Very soon he and Charlotte were able to welcome friends under their own roof, the house with a large garden in 'the straggling village of Richmond' where James was to live for the rest of his life.

They had arrived at the time of great excitement over the discovery of gold at Bathurst, the place whose name had for so long been familiar to the Hentys as the first Australian home of John Street. As a result of the discovery, Melbourne's population was so restless that influential citizens were advertising rewards for the finding of gold nearer home in the hope of stemming an exodus to the north. James had, in fact, returned at the very moment when Australia's Pastoral Age ended and its Gold Era began. Almost at once the hoped-for local gold was found in fabulous quantities at Buninyong, north-west from Geelong and no farther thence than sixty miles. Now, practically every man dropped his job and made for the diggings, bringing the ordinary machinery of Melbourne's life to an end. These were hard conditions in which to start business. On landing, James had found little sale for the goods brought out in the *Persia*, such was the public's concentration on the Bathurst gold: after the Buninyong discovery there was no sale at all for the merchandise that followed by other ships, for now the only goods in demand were picks and shovels, horses and drays. But soon the hordes of gold-seekers, English and colonial, that swept through Melbourne on their way to the diggings began to return with their nuggets and their 'dust', avid to spend: by the beginning of 1852 business in the town was brisker than ever before and the human components of James Henty & Co.—

James himself, young Henry, the assistant, Mr. Randall, the book-keeper from California, Mr. Flaxman—were so busy that they did not know which way to turn. Soon James was buying gold to ship to England with his cargoes of tallow and wool. Soon, too, as one would expect, he began to play his part in public affairs. He had arrived in time not only to see the end of the Pastoral Age but to witness the last days of the District of Port Phillip, for in July 1851, amid wild jubilation, it was created a separate colony and called Victoria after the Queen. In the next year James was elected a representative of Portland in the old legislative council and shortly after, under the new Victorian constitution, was returned for the same constituency, remaining in the Upper House as a member—reputedly a very silent one—for the rest of his life. Appointed a commissioner of Victoria's Savings Banks, he became chairman in 1859. He was one of the first directors, and later chairman, of Victoria's first railway, linking Melbourne with its port at the Yarra's mouth. And, as before, his family, his garden, and his religion were the props of his life.

In 1859, thinking of his son Tom, trained at Muntham with Fetherstonhaugh and restive to have a place of his own, James took up 90,000 acres of Crown Land across the Murray in country that Major Mitchell had passed through on his homeward journey in 1836. It is a family belief that Mitchell influenced James's choice; if so, it was not in the course of conversation with the Hentys, as in the case of the Wannon, but because of allusions to the area in Mitchell's book: allusions only, not panegyrics such as those he wrote of the lush pastures traversed in the south. Although by 1859 it was twenty years since the publication of the book, and the Yass mailman had regularly travelled this way for as long, the country between the Murray and the Murrumbidgee was still largely unoccupied. Only now, in the late fifties, was it realized that this was the type of country ideal for the merino breed. On the dry red-earth plains mentioned by Mitchell, edged by small granite peaks, served by occasional streams flowing from the not-too-distant Australian Alps in the east—here James shrewdly chose his run. He called it Round Hill, and built the first dwelling, a slab hut, among the trees bordering the Billabong Creek, Mitchell's 'very fine little rivulet' flowing between grassy banks twenty-five feet high.

A neighbouring run, Walla Walla, was taken up by Stephen for Richmond, his eldest son, and stocked with cattle, but was soon sold again, while Round Hill remained a family property until sold in 1952. Both runs were near to the present town of Albury; they lay on the eastern edge of the district later called the Riverina and long since famous for its merinos, animals loaded with such heavy fleeces that the breeders of Thomas Henty's day would not recognize in them descendants of their simple forebears, the Spanish merinos of George III.

Until James became infirm, it was his daily habit to walk from Richmond Hill to his office in Little Collins Street and Charlotte called for him every afternoon. Often a favourite grandson, little James Balfour, rode with her in the carriage, silently observant of her pink cheeks and her plum-coloured skirts; the boy was the eldest son of the Hentys' daughter, Fanny, and James Balfour, the able young Scotsman who had come out to Victoria to join the Henty firm. Charlotte was not sixty when she died and now that James Balfour the younger, of Round Hill, is no longer alive there is none that can remember her. But James Henty, who was born in 1800 and outlived his wife by many years, is vividly remembered by a Balfour granddaughter in the present year, 1953. Neither the shock of losing his wife, nor his own increasing age, took from James his capacity for family devotion. The grand-daughter, once the small Robina Balfour, looking back to the childhood of herself and her brothers and sisters—seven of them—describes their Henty grandfather as 'the very centre of our lives'. He used to take young James on long excursions—to his farm, Mt. Duneed, beyond Geelong, or to see great-Uncle Stephen's ship, the *Frances Henty*, clipper-built and 573 tons, aground near Port Phillip Heads, her cargo floating to the beach. During those days spent together the old man would tell the boy stories of family cricket prowess in Sussex, of the long-ago voyage in the *Caroline* and adventures with blacks in the West; of the finding of the Wannon country, thanks to Mitchell, and the family's losing battle for free right to retain their land: interesting and amusing stories absorbed by young James Balfour and recounted seventy-five years later at Round Hill to the writer of this book. As James Henty grew older, though he did not cease to attend the sittings of the Upper House, he spent less and less time in his

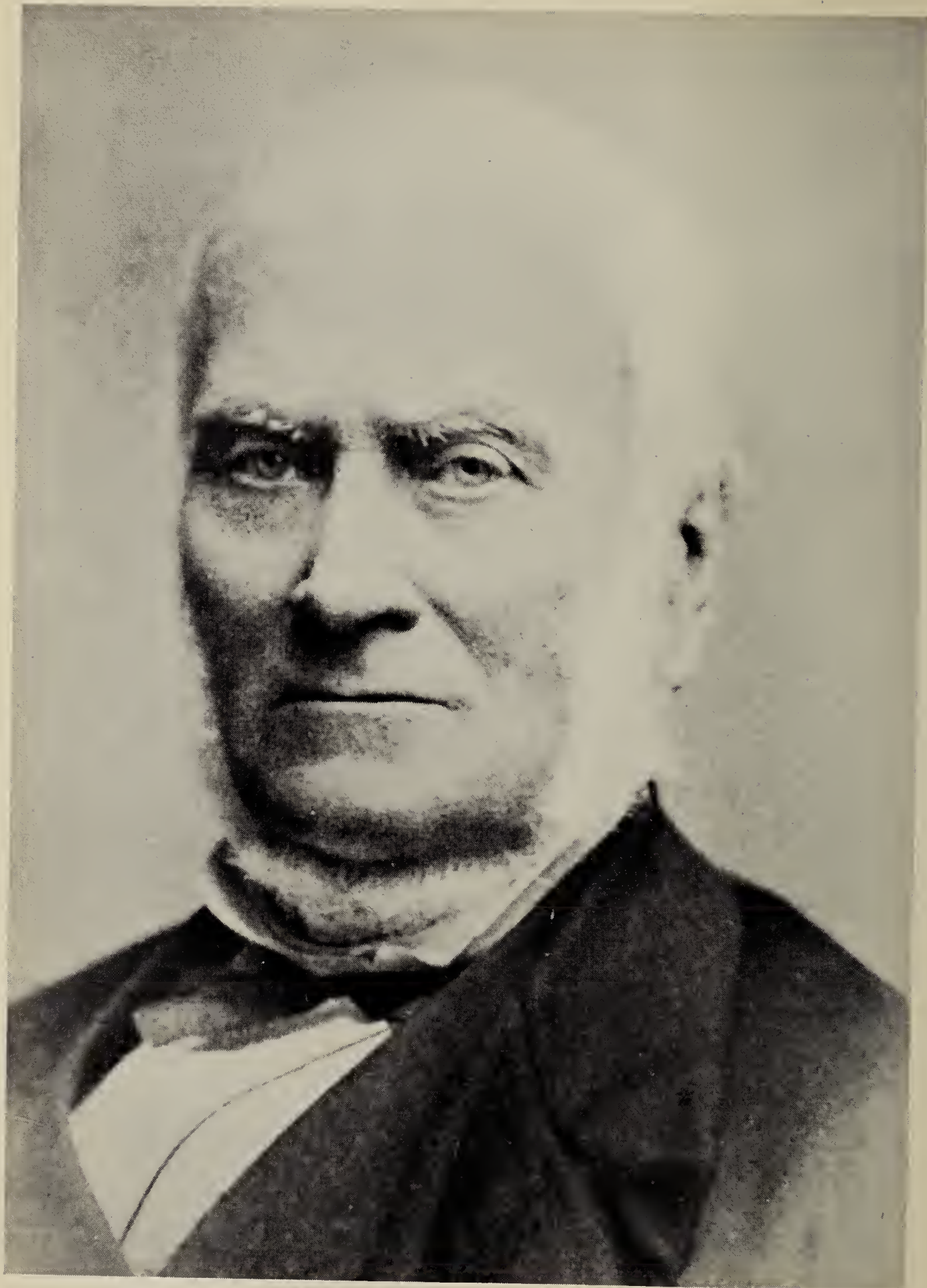
office and more at home with the two unmarried daughters whom he continued to call 'the Girls'. Every afternoon Robina and her little sisters used to walk with their nurse across the paddocks near their Melbourne home to the big house, Richmond Hill, and every afternoon, despite his increasing sciatic pains, their grandfather was their unfailing and genial companion, amusing them for hours in some satisfying way. In the season he would take them into the kitchen garden and give them the freedom of the gooseberry bushes, of the Alpine strawberries (but not the bigger kinds), a separate row for each child and all trespassing barred. On wet days, or when there was no fresh fruit, they might climb up to the top shelf of a cupboard and help themselves to preserved fruits and almonds, all home-grown. He instilled a life-long love of gardening into young James Balfour and taught them all to play cricket, girls as well as boys. In wet weather the cricket-lessons took place in the green-house—three sides glass and no broken panes allowed—where canaries sang loudly from the corner aviary and James, bowling seated on a camp-stool, was very particular about a straight bat. It was from this same camp-stool, carried to a Melbourne Cricket Ground then innocent of grand-stands, that he watched the growth of first-class cricket, never missing a match. Grandfather, as Robina noted, could be very obstinate; but with his grand-daughters he was unbending in only one thing—he forbade them to use ambiguous English or slang. 'How are you today?' he would ask them as they arrived for their daily frolic; and when they replied 'All right, thank you!' he used to repeat '*All right?* What do you mean? "All right" has nothing to do with health!' And yet, as Robina unavailingly pointed out, asked how he was himself he always answered, maddeningly, 'Tol-lol.'

For the old, the beginning of yet another new year brings the ache of retrospect and even to those, like James, of unfailing faith, the disturbing question—'Is this to be my last?' In the early days of January 1882 his thoughts travelling back through the past, James was moved to open up the packets of papers he had kept during the years—letters, lists, pocket-diaries, drafts of memorials to influential men long dead: among them he found the copy of his own letter to William setting out the pros and cons of the plan for migration to New Holland and written



By courtesy of the Editor, Pastoral Review

52. A CHAMPION MERINO RAM, SYDNEY, 1952



53. JAMES HENTY, MERCHANT
11 January 1882, the day before his death

over half a century before. What memories of confident youth did its reading bring? Poignant they must have been, recalling scenes almost forgotten, experiences long absorbed into the fabric of his life, evoking once more the faces of people loved and long gone. A weaker nature than his might have found the reading all pain, but it stirred quite other feelings in James. Next day he told a son of the discovery and of his own delight: in old age it seems he was able to look on the past, with all its sorrows and disappointments, as courageously as he had faced the unknown future as a young man, and to assess that half century as on the whole good.

Tuesday, 10 January, the day of the paper-sorting, was one of oppressive heat a little relieved in the evening by thunder and rain. James's diary records the scorching winds, the clouds of dust, the household's sleepless night and severe headaches such as he himself had not experienced for years. 'I am greatly depressed', he wrote, 'and can scarcely keep up'. Next day he looked as usual for newspaper accounts from the neighbourhood of Round Hill, and added a note that

The up country reports of the weather and temperature all bear the same character—the heat and dust being fearful. At Wodonga 111 was recorded and about the same at Albury. Grass and water failing and fears of a drought. I got some sleep last night by the aid of my Doan's Powder Pills and feel somewhat relieved.

The morning was still oppressive; later, the temperature fell considerably with a slight change of wind. In the evening, writing up his diary as usual, James wrote

Today at the request of the Girls I went into town to have my photograph taken. The process and heat was exhausting.

Bar $28\frac{78}{95}$

Ther $\frac{62}{87}$

Next morning, the 12th, he was heard moving about as usual and a servant took him a cup of coffee in his room. A little later one of his daughters, going in to see him, found the valiant old man dead.

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| (b) Letter from John Street to Thomas Henty, written from Woodlands, Bathurst, N.S.W., Dec. 1828; lately owned by the Rev. W. E. and Miss Amy Henty Summers. | " |
| (c) Letters of William and Matilda Henty. | " |

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- 1827 VISCOUNT GODERICH
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- 1830 GODERICH (afterwards EARL RIPON)
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- 1839 MARQUIS OF NORMANBY
LORD JOHN RUSSELL
- 1841 LORD STANLEY (later EARL DERBY)
- 1845 RT. HON. W. E. GLADSTONE
- 1846 EARL GREY

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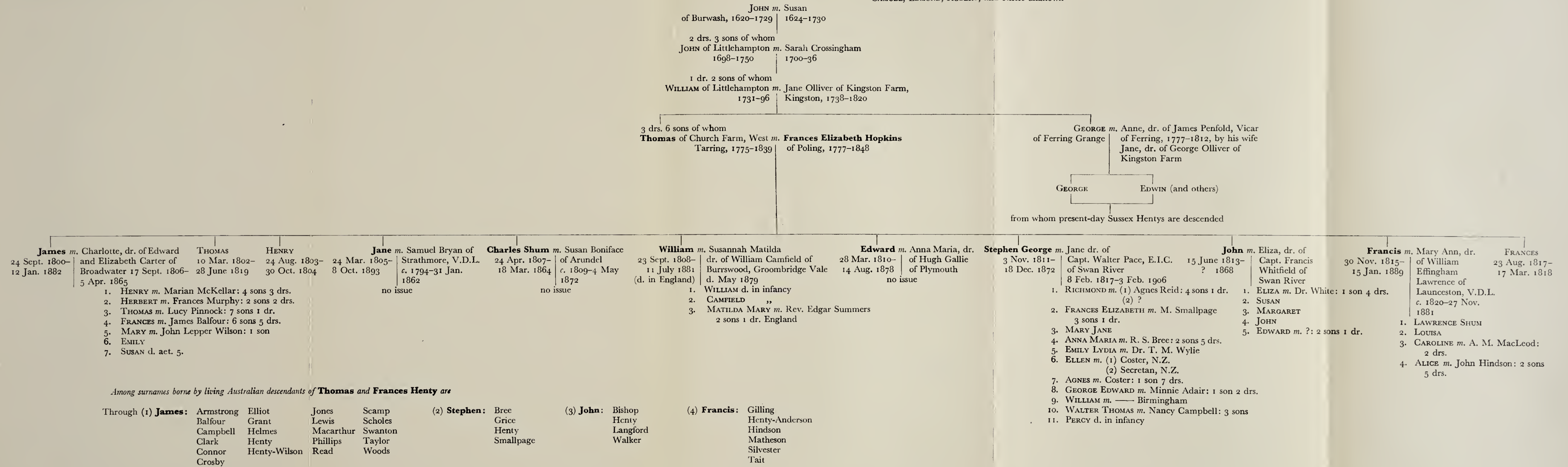
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- 1845 RT. HON. W. E. GLADSTONE
- 1846 EARL GREY

JOHNE and ROBERTO c.1327 }
WALTER c. 1379 } of Wivelsfield, Sussex
THOMAS c. 1524 }

Names of Thomas Henty and his wife and those of their family who emigrated to Australia are printed in bold type

SAMUEL *m.* Margaret
d. 1626
|
4 sons 1 dr.
and grandsons
SAMUEL, EDMUND, ROBERT, and others unknown



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- 2 MUNTHAM
- 3 SANDFORD
- 4 CONNELL'S RUN

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RIVOLI
BAYGLENELG
RIVER

THE GRAMPYANS

PYRENEES

MT MACEDON

MT GAMBIER

WANNON RIVER
THE GRANGE

WILLIAMSTOWN

MELBO

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DISCOVERY
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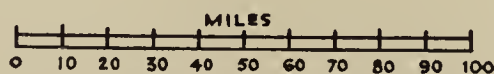
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INDENTED HEAD
PT NEPEAN
COLLINS CAMP
1803
ARTHURS SEAT

WESTERN PORT BAY

B A

KING IS

SOUTHERN PART OF PORT PHILLIP DISTRICT OF NEW SOUTH WALES (SOUTHERN VICTORIA) AND VAN DIEMEN'S LAND (TASMANIA)

CIRCUS
HEAD

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